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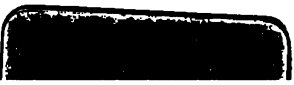
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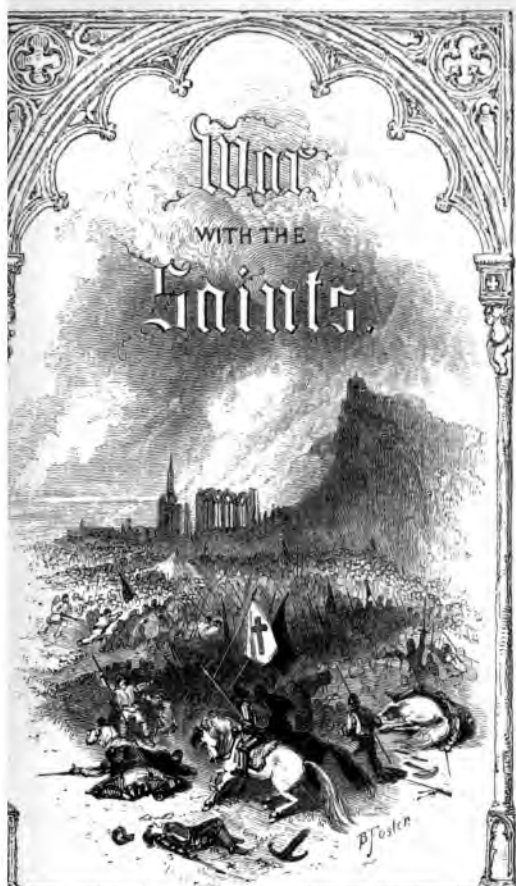




WAR WITH THE SAINTS.







LONDON.

SEELEYS.

MDCCCLXVIII.



WAR WITH THE SAINTS:

BY

CHARLOTTE ELIZABETH.

Original

Seeleys.

FLEET STREET, AND HANOVER STREET.

MDCCCXLVIII.

L. SEELEY, PRINTER.

THE present volume is the last work which proceeded from the pen of CHARLOTTE ELIZABETH. It occupied much of her time and thoughts during the last eighteen months of her life; and the story and her earthly existence came to a close almost at the same moment.

The work presents a singular instance, also, of a literary labour persevered in, and carried to a completion, under circumstances of the most painful character. Shortly after she had commenced this narrative, an ailment which ultimately proved to be cancer, shewed itself, which terminated her life on the 12th of July, 1846. Her mental vigour, however, was scarcely diminished by it, even up to the very close of her days. In her *Personal Recollections* the methods she had recourse to, during her illness, are thus described :

“She continued to conduct her Magazine; and to effect the mechanical operation of writing, she in-

vented during one of her sleepless nights a machine which was immediately constructed by a clever carpenter. It consisted of two rollers on a frame ; on the lower one many yards of paper were rolled, and as fast as she filled a page, writing with the frame resting on her knees, a turn of a small winch wound off the manuscript to the upper roller, and brought up a clean surface of paper. In this manner she would write papers for the press, and letters to friends, measuring three, or four, or six yards in length. Dictation was very difficult to her ; no pen but her own could follow her thoughts with sufficient rapidity, nor did she resort to this mode of writing, until absolutely compelled to it, during the two last months of her life."

It was by the help of this machinery, that the present volume was written. And remembering that it is the last volume produced by her that can be offered to the public, it will not be out of place to add, from the same source, a few details of the last week of her earthly existence :

" She now greatly desired to visit the sea-side, and the doctors concurring in the belief that such a change would be beneficial, Ramsgate was selected, and the 10th of July was fixed for departure. She was very weak, and it was necessary to carry her from her apartments in the United Service Institution, to the carriage. It had been her wish that the six serjeants attached to the Institution should bear her pall in case of her death taking place there ; they carried her now alive indeed, but with the hand of death upon her. She thanked

them most cordially for all their kindness and attention during her illness, and shaking hands with each, asked the Lord to bless them. On the way to the Terminus she passed the great Mass-house, now rearing itself in St. George's Fields. She leant forward, and holding up her hand in denunciation against it, repeated, as had often been her wont in Hebrew, the words of the Psalmist, 'O daughter of Babylon, that art to be destroyed !' On arriving at the station she found that every care had been taken for her comfort ; a separate carriage having been fitted up for her by orders of the Chairman, enabling her to lie down during the journey. Her ever-kind friend, Sir Moses, was waiting to bid her farewell, and placed beside her a basket of the choicest grapes to refresh her during the journey. Her heart was full of gratitude, which vented itself in the often-repeated words, 'How good the Lord is, to make every one so kind to me.'

"The moment the door of the carriage was closed, she bade her companions—her husband and her faithful servant, Mary Nelms—kneel down, and ask the Lord to uphold her during the journey, and the prayer was graciously heard.

"When passing through Canterbury, her attention was directed to the splendid cathedral. She said, 'Yes, it is very grand ; but there is where the martyrs were starved to death !' pointing to the towers of an ancient gateway, which spans one of the main streets of the city.

"She arrived at Ramsgate at half-past six, and went to an hotel, as the apartments she was to occupy on the

West Cliff were not yet vacated. She was fatigued and exhausted, and immediately retired to rest ; and her delight was great at finding that, as she lay on her pillow, she had a full view of the sea and entrance to the harbour.

“On the following morning, a slight bleeding commenced, which soon became alarming, and a surgeon was immediately called in. He succeeded in staunching the hæmorrhage, but not before much blood had been lost, as it was one of the larger blood-vessels which had now been invaded by the cancer. Mr. Ayres, the surgeon, made some remark about her tranquillity and resignation, to which she replied, ‘It is the love of Jesus that sustains me.’ She now grew very faint, and Mr. Ayres’ attention was unremitting. She then said, ‘My flesh and my heart fail me, but Jesus does not fail me.’ A little weak wine and water somewhat revived her ; and, as Mr. Ayres left the room, she said, with some energy, ‘Do you love the Lord Jesus ?’ and shewed pleasure when he gave a sign of assent. She then bade those around her kneel and pray for her, saying, ‘Pardon and acceptance, nothing more.’

“Her kind Jewish friends, Mr. and Mrs. Myers, had heard of her arrival, and immediately came to see her : she was too feeble to say much to them, but was just able to tell them, that Jesus upheld her—that he was her hope and refuge.

“Towards the evening she rallied, and, during the whole night, was calm and cheerful, even to playfulness ; but hardly an hour passed without the words, ‘How very good He is to me.’ When the midnight

train arrived, she was a little disappointed at finding that her physician, Mr. Hering, for whom a messenger had been sent immediately on the occurrence of the bleeding, could not arrive till the next day, and remarked that she did not think she should live to see him. In the morning of the 12th a marked change was apparent in her countenance; her breathing became somewhat oppressed, and, at eleven o'clock, she suddenly exclaimed, 'It is death.' Mr. Ayres was immediately sent for, and confirmed the sad truth: she seemed to suffer no pain: no sigh or groan escaped her: her countenance was perfectly calm, tranquil, and happy; and she kept her eye steadily fixed on her husband, following his every motion, and showing uneasiness if, for a moment, he moved from her side. Life seemed slowly ebbing away.

"Once again her eyes brightened: her husband was leaning over her, and throwing her arm round his neck, and pressing his lips to her's, she exclaimed with intense emphasis, 'I love you.'

"All thought that these were her last words; but, it soon became evident that she was gathering her remaining strength for a mighty effort, and then, with death in every look and tone—gasping between each word—but with a loud, clear, distinct voice, she uttered these words:—'Tell them'—naming some dear Jewish friends—'Tell them that Jesus is the Messiah; and tell —.' Her hand had forgotten its cunning; her tongue was cleaving to the roof of her mouth, but Charlotte Elizabeth had not forgotten Jerusalem.

"The breathings grew fainter and fainter, her brow

was slightly convulsed, and at twenty minutes past two, she fell asleep in Jesus.

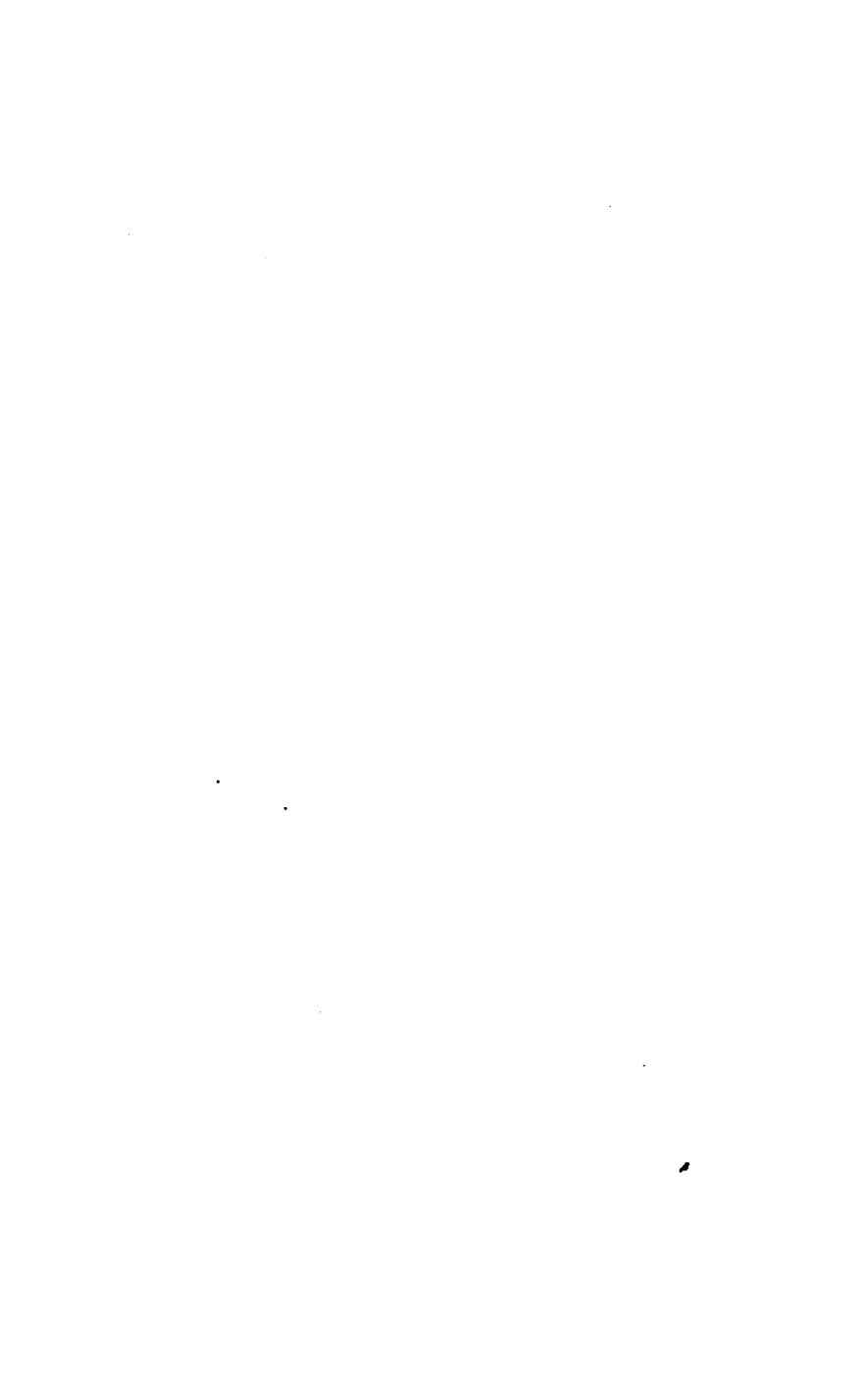
“She was buried in Ramsgate Church-yard on the 15th ; a meeting of the inhabitants having been called in the Town Hall to shew respect to her memory. The Church and Church-yard were crowded, and the service was most touchingly performed by the Rev. H. H. Bea-mish, who came from London to perform the last office to his dear friend and sister—the friend of his own be-loved land. The flag at East Cliff Lodge was lowered half mast, and a letter was read in the Town Hall from Sir Moses Montefiore, expressing his deep regret, that he was unable from pressing business personally to at-tend the mournful ceremony.

“It was noticed in the Voice of Jacob, that her death took place on the 9th of Ab, the day, when throughout the world the Jews were mourning and fasting, in com-memoration of the destruction of Jerusalem, both by Nebuchadnezzar and by Titus—it was also the anniver-sary of the battle of the Boyne, the day when her room had always been decked with the choicest Orange Lilies.

“She had charged her husband two months previ-ously, never to lay her in a vault, but in a simple earth-dug grave, and in a perishable coffin, disliking all at-tempts to avert the Almighty decree, “Dust thou art, and unto dust thou shalt return.” On visiting the lake of Mullingar, where her beloved brother was drowned, she brought away from the banks a little plant, which she preserved in her various gardens, and latterly in a flower-pot ; this she directed should be planted on her grave, together with some shamrocks and hearts-ease.

She also directed that no stone should be laid over her, but that her resting-place should be marked by a simple headstone, dictating the epitaph, which, with the addition of the date, has been thus inscribed,

HERE LIE THE MORTAL REMAINS OF
CHARLOTTE ELIZABETH,
THE BELOVED WIFE OF H. L. J. TONNA,
WHO DEPARTED THIS LIFE
ON THE 12TH OF JULY, 1846.
LOOKING UNTO JESUS.



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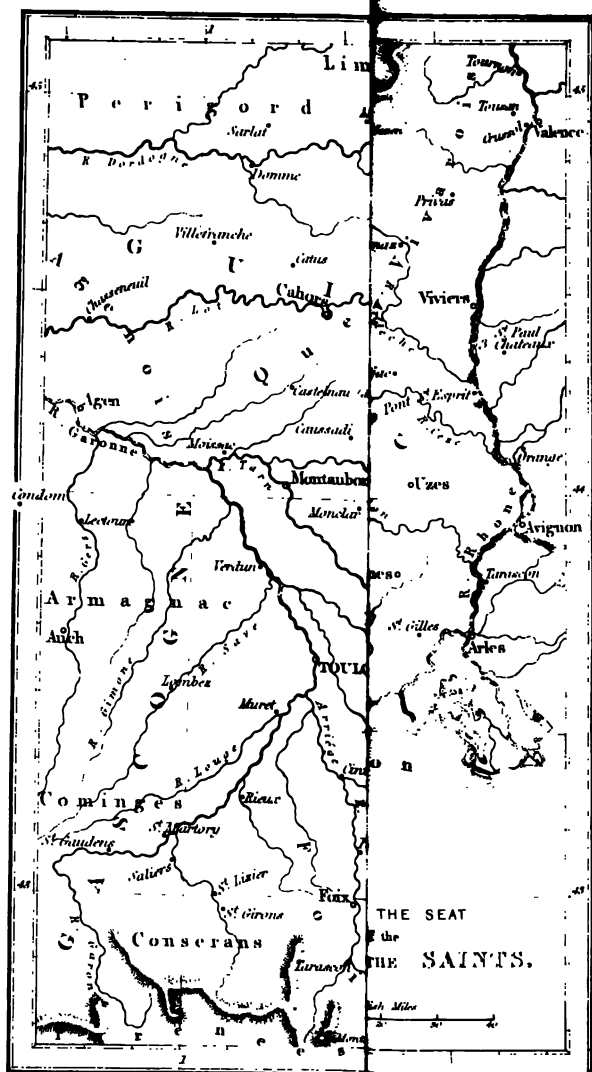
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WAR WITH THE SAINTS.

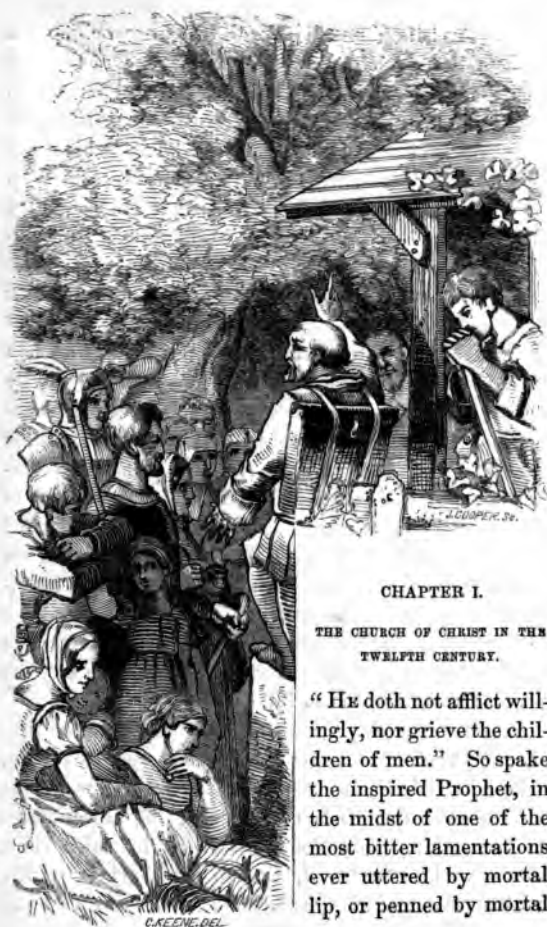


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CHAPTER FIRST.



THE CHURCH OF CHRIST IN THE TWELFTH CENTURY.



CHAPTER I.

THE CHURCH OF CHRIST IN THE TWELFTH CENTURY.

"HE doth not afflict willingly, nor grieve the children of men." So spake the inspired Prophet, in the midst of one of the most bitter lamentations ever uttered by mortal lip, or penned by mortal

hand. A visitation of dire wrath had overwhelmed his nation ; the severity of which, in the eye of a pious Israelite, it is scarcely possible for us even faintly to conceive ; Jerusalem was overthrown, her palaces destroyed ; the holy and beautiful house where her children had worshipped was burnt with fire, and with it was lost a treasure such as no people on earth had ever possessed—tablets, on which the finger of Omnipotence had traced in visible characters the great commandments of His eternal law : a portion miraculously preserved, of what the Psalmist calls “angel’s food,” the sustenance with which, for forty years, Israel had been daily fed from heaven, and which was laid up, by Divine command, as a testimony for succeeding generations ; the rod also, whence in a night had sprouted the leaf and blossom, and the fruit had ripened, to establish by miraculous attestation the High Priesthood of Aaron and his sons over the whole house of Israel. All these were lost : and with them the mercy-seat, on which rested the glorious Shechinah, the visible manifestation of the Divine Presence. Judah, too, was gone into captivity, the palaces of Zion were forsaken, her mighty bulwarks were broken down, and the city sat solitary that had been so full of people.

To attempt a description of what was then the agonizing affliction of those who looked upon the ruin, alike of the land, the city, and the people, would be to transcribe the whole of that touching Lamentation of Jeremiah ; yet in the midst of all, his faith rises, strong and undepressed, though his heart is wrung with sorrow, and his eyes failed with weeping day and

night for the destruction of the daughter of his people ; and he says, "The Lord will not cast off for ever ; but though he cause grief, yet will he have compassion, according to the multitude of his mercies. For he doth not afflict willingly nor grieve the children of men." This is the more remarkable, because under the Mosaic dispensation, national and individual prosperity in temporal things was counted as a token of the Divine favour : it was promised as such ; its withdrawal was an express avowal of wrath against the sufferer ; and the utter blight that had now fallen upon the Jewish people, the dissolution of their polity, the extinction of their kingdom ; above all, the profanation and wreck of their most holy things, with their own forcible expulsion from the land that God gave unto their fathers, was a trial of faith the most fiery that it could be subjected to by Him who, as a refiner of silver, sits to judge and to purify his people.

Well, therefore, may we, when about to treat of heavy calamities which befel the Christian church, select this from among the things that happened for examples, and which are written for our admonition upon whom the ends of the world are come : for we must fix our regards on times and events that no eye can steadily contemplate, apart from the full assurance of faith that the Lord never did, never could, never will forsake or overlook one trusting soul : that, howsoever our hearts may yearn over their miseries in the flesh, still we are authorized to count them happy which endure ; and to remember that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the

glory that shall be revealed, when those who have taken up their Master's cross and left all for him, shall be exalted in the sight of the universe to share his final reign. To which be it added, they concerning whom we are about to write have now long, long been resting from every labour, and enjoying the blessedness secured to all who die in the Lord. Although the consummation of their glory be not yet come, because he has not yet taken to him his great power, and openly reigned, still they are with him in paradise, having washed their robes from the stain even of their own martyrdom, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.

Not as the Mosaic, was the Christian institution, in temporal things : not as the visible kingdom of Israel was to be the invisible kingdom of Christ, during his personal absence from his people. The difference between the external circumstances of the two is as wide as the difference between the unveiled Majesty of the awfully-glorious descent from the blazing heavens on Sinai's summit, and the shroud of woe, and darkness, and humiliation that hung over the descent from the blood-stained cross to the grave. Israel of old could say, "The Lord is a man of war," and under his banner they marched forth, to execute vengeance upon his stubborn enemies, and to establish a visible dominion to which appertained the visible glory of his frequent presence, robed in the cloud that rested on the place of which he had vouchsafed to say, "Here will I dwell." The church of Christ looks to her Master, and hears his word in reference to temporal things, "If I were a king, then would my subjects fight ; but *now* is my

kingdom not from hence." She knows that in order finally to reign, she must first suffer with him ; and though her whole course is a warfare, it is not against flesh and blood that she must wrestle with carnal weapons : the principalities and powers and wicked spirits in high places that prompt evil men to injure her are the foes that she has to conquer ; and well do her children know that them they must overcome by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony, loving not their lives unto the death. In all this there is a beauty, and a fitness, and a harmonious adaptation of the various parts, each to its own peculiar time and order of working, that we cannot too attentively contemplate. They are portions of the one magnificent whole which we see not yet ; but from which in its still shrouded mysteriousness a ray of glory sometimes darts into the believing soul, sufficient to cheer it under all sorrows, and to nerve it into such endurance as frail humanity could otherwise never attain to.

The worldly service, and the sanctuary, that belonged unto Israel, never were intended to outlast their own supremacy, nor to pass into other hands while they remain outcast and dispersed, reft of their national privileges. The apostle distinctly says, that to his brethren, his kinsmen after the flesh, who are Israelites, pertain the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the promises. In all this he plainly refers to matters in which we have no part, under the present dispensation ; and it was in an unauthorized, unscriptural

attempt to grasp at these external things that the Christian church, as an ecclesiastical body, lost her balance, and fell. She would needs have, of her own, an outward "adoption," irrespective of the witnessing Spirit within; therefore tending to grieve, to resist, and finally to quench that Spirit: she would have a "glory" equivalent to the divine Shechinah, though to accomplish it she must make to herself an imaginary divinity: she would arrogate the possession of a "covenant" that left all beyond her external pale in a state of heathen alienation from God: she would be a "lawgiver"—the word should go forth from Constantinople, the law of the Lord from Rome. She would have a "service;" a temple, an altar, a sacrifice, with no better warrant than could be shewn for the golden calves at Bethel and at Dan; and bearing precisely the same analogy to the scriptural worship of God, as did these royal inventions to the holy place at Jerusalem, from which they were effectual in seducing many to the ruin of their own souls. She would also appropriate "the promises:" and that so exclusively that none who were not outwardly and visibly of her, should have any part or lot in the heavenly Canaan: and, in process of time, the self-appointed lawgiver became also a judge and an executioner; so that the penalty of death, imposed under the Jewish institution on apostates to idolatry, came to be denounced, and most unsparingly carried out by her, upon all such as should refuse to acknowledge the gods many, and lords many, whom in the progress of her judicial infatuation she was led to set up. Hence the

sufferings of the true church of Christ ; whose office it became, of imperative necessity, to bear witness not only for him, but against the false one who wrongfully usurped a title not her own, and proclaimed herself the occupant of a vacated throne, which it was God's pleasure should remain untenanted, until He come whose right it is.

"I sit as a queen," said the intoxicated self-deceiver, when thus she had, in her own estimation, climbed up to heaven ;—"I am no widow, and shall see no sorrow." Far different was the language of the true church : she has lighted her lamp, and remains watching at her unpretending post, until the cry shall be heard, "Behold, the bridegroom cometh !" Instead of assuming the possession of those rich and goodly things that belonged to the former temple ; and titles, and offices, and honours, which could not outlive its destruction ; the members of that lowly church declare, "We have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us. We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed ; we are perplexed, but not in despair : persecuted, but not forsaken ; cast down, but not destroyed : always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus ; that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body. For we which live are always delivered unto death for Jesus' sake ; that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh." (2 Cor. iv. 7—11.)

This, then, is the respective attitude of the two classes whom we now are to exhibit in their most

striking contrast : the one, in attempting to rise to an inaccessible height, had fallen into grievous apostacy, yet madly. believed themselves to have attained the point of their ambition : and launched around them the flames of hell, as though they had been the lightnings of heaven entrusted to their disposal. The other, firmly seated on the rock where God had placed them ; exposed to every onset, every wrong, and patiently abiding all, rather than quit that firm foundation for the pit where their fellows were plunged, until, their testimony being severally finished, they were received into the place prepared for them by their ascended Lord. To the eye of man, the two might be mingled together, and often so indiscriminately that no mortal might distinguish them in the wild commotion of the hour ; but times there were when they stood apart in visible relief, as bold and as obvious as was their actual separation in the eye of Him who knoweth them that are his.

Yet again, we have to guard against the supposition that a state of suffering is inseparable from the profession and possession of a true faith. "Godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come." Many a devoted follower of the Lord Jesus has passed through life, or at least through that portion of mortal life which succeeded his conversion to God, with no other affliction than that which the struggle of inbred corruptions against sanctifying grace must occasion to every believer. The Apostles, in a season of severe persecution, addressed themselves to various churches,

each partaking, or about to partake more or less in the same tribulation. But even then there were periods of refreshment, concerning which it is recorded, "And they continuing daily with one accord in the Temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart ; praising God, and having favour with all the people." And again, after a very fierce outbreak of persecuting violence against the Lord's servants, "Then had the churches rest throughout all Judea and Galilee and Samaria, and were edified ; and walking in the fear of the Lord, and in the comfort of the Holy Ghost, were multiplied."

But when the enemies of Christ become active ; when, by fraud or by force, they seek to pervert the right ways of the Lord, and to turn away their brethren from the faith, then farewell to rest and peace and prosperity, so far as outward things are concerned, on the part of his true soldiers ! They have, perhaps, been realizing that comfortable word, "Who is he that will harm you, if ye be followers of that which is good ?" they must now look to the context, "But and if ye suffer for righteousness' sake, happy are ye ! And be not afraid of their terror, neither be troubled ; but sanctify the Lord God in your hearts." These and similar expressions, with which we are all familiar, and which may have yielded sweet comfort to ourselves under our light afflictions, are deep wells of consolation, proportioning the fulness and richness of their supply to the actual need of such as approach them : and while one may have found them requisite to yield sup-

port under the affliction of beholding a frown on some beloved and honoured countenance, while obeying God rather than man, by refusing to partake in the sinful follies of the vain world ; another has drawn from the very same words power to look on the lingering tortures of a dreadful death inflicted on the dearest earthly objects of the heart's affection, and finally to endure the same without even a wish to escape the fiery trial by compromising a firm profession of the truth as it is in Jesus. This is a solitary text ; and we who possess the full volume of divine consolation, must not forget that in times when, perhaps, a whole community of believers had only succeeded in secreting among them a single manuscript copy of one isolated Gospel or Epistle, a value belonged to such detached portions of an imperfect fragment which we can but faintly appreciate ; or how " by *every* word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God, doth man live."

When the Lord declares to the favoured Evangelist his purpose to give power to his two witnesses, that they should prophecy in sackcloth for the long space of twelve hundred and sixty prophetic days—a day for a year—we are led to expect something remarkable, both in the great length of the afflictive dispensation, and the given power of endurance to successive generations of faithful men. It imports that for so long, an enemy should reign, whose efforts would be systematically directed to the suppression of this persevering testimony ; and that, although unable to silence it, they should so far prevail as to invest the witnesses with insignia of humiliation and of mourning. We, therefore,

are not authorized to stretch these peculiar features of a witnessing church beyond the period assigned ; nor to conclude that heavy trouble is the invariable badge of God's children. Some whom He has not made sad, often sadden their own hearts by needless doubts of their adoption into his family, when they contrast their overflowing cup of temporal blessings with the bitter sufferings of some of whom the world was not worthy. Therefore do we preface with a few cautionary words, the narrative of a truly witnessing church throughout a period of unequalled violence on the part of a dominant apostacy.

But as we cannot conceive of a true follower of Christ, that in a season of prosperity in temporal things he should lay aside the lowliness that forms a part of the Christian character, assume the dress and deportment of an ostentatious worldling, and follow the dissipated practices of the ungodly multitude, just because there is no outward hindrance to his so doing ; neither can we reconcile to the character of a Christian community, the adoption of externals that have ever, from the first falling away, been the badge of a corrupt and wicked apostacy. Ostensibly inherited from the Jewish Church, but in reality borrowed from the very worst forms of paganism, these ecclesiastical adornments, and arrogant assumptions, and unseemly luxuries, leading as they inevitably do to the crime of spiritual adultery, are as far removed from the path chalked out for that church which is the spouse of Christ, as is the former course inconsistent with the duties of an individual member. If the Lord has put off our sackcloth and

girded us with gladness, are we therefore to array ourselves in purple and fine linen, to fare sumptuously every day, and to trample in our pride on the poor brother outside the gate of our own costly mansion ? This is palpably the tendency of our national church in these times, and the mourning garb of our fathers, their prison-walls, their pile of blazing faggots, are all forgotten, in a growing imitation of the gay attire, the goodly architecture, the lordly rule of their ancient persecutor. Alas ! too prone also are we to forget the word of their testimony, while learning the dulcet notes of her song who slew them.

Happy would it be for us, could we more accurately interpret, and more feelingly appropriate, that much-abused term, "the church." There is no lack of help so to do ; for we are repeatedly told that the church is the body of Christ ; his bride ; the Lamb's wife. It is described also as the temple of God, because in each true believer, individually, the Holy Ghost dwells ; each is by virtue of this indwelling Spirit of life made to live, in the highest sense of the word ; so becoming a living stone ; and while a multitude of these stones may indeed exhibit a larger and more outwardly conspicuous building, two or three, yea, only one, where but one is left in a godless community, will form a perfect temple, and that temple is the church of the living God. Where a sufficient number can be collected, offices will of course be filled, a form of ecclesiastical direction and government carried out, in accordance with the scriptural model, that all things may be done decently and in order ; but to invest with the term

church the external framework, teaching Christians to regard that of which they themselves form the substance as a somewhat placed midway between Christ and their consciences, a somewhat claiming the title of their dear and holy mother, and as such exercising parental authority over them, is to establish a confusion of words and things, tending not only to perplex the mind but to obscure the faith, and finally to lead into subjection to an irresponsible human authority those who are commanded to try all things, and to hold fast that which is good ; even the form of sound words delivered by inspired men, and opened to their understandings by the same indwelling Spirit of God, apart from whose direct influence a man, be his external privileges what they may, is none of Christ's.

When Luther, in the solitude of his monkish cell, had experienced this illumination, he appears as though the whole flood of revealing light were concentrated on him alone. But it was not so : like Andrew, he enjoyed a precedence in the vocation of a ministry that was to guide the steps of multitudes from the dark valley of the shadow of death, where they sat, into the way of peace ; but God had many hidden ones, so taught of the Holy Spirit that they worshipped him with a pure worship, and bore, no doubt, each in his own little sphere, the cross of a faithful profession ; though so terribly successful had the enemy been in slaying the witnesses, that for three years and a half no sound, no sign of life was publicly recognizable to interrupt the triumphant vaunt of an unbroken rule. In like manner, at the commencement of that era which

seems then to have closed, we can discover but one, and he an obscure man, to whom was committed the stewardship of the mysteries of God ; long thrust from view, and set at nought, until to all appearance they were withdrawn from earth, to make room for the swelling imposture, the mystery of iniquity that usurped their name and place. It is a very remarkable feature in the history of that dark period of the Christian Church to which our attention is now to be drawn. The world, even the world calling itself Christian, and therefore assuming to be also the church, in a state so dark that the lighting of a single candle forms an epoch in its annals ; the multiplication of lights continuing under a sustained and vehement effort on the part of their adversaries for more than twelve centuries and a half to extinguish them ; followed by the renewed though very brief reign of that gross darkness, and the relighting again from a solitary taper, of such a blaze as has spread, more or less, into all lands, and which certainly will not again be put out.

But the gates of hell never so prevailed as to leave the Lord without a little company on earth, to each of whom that gracious promise was fulfilled, "Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world." Where but two or three could be gathered together, rightly professing his name, there was He in the midst of them ; and if the sad experience of Paul became that of an unsupported individual,—“No man stood with me,”—his also was Paul's rich consolation, “Nevertheless, the Lord stood with me, and strengthened me.” Poor indeed is the spectacle of pomp and ceremony

compared with scenes like these, when the poor, persecuted, harassed, helpless outcast, pursued by the world's scorn, and well nigh crushed beneath its cruel violence, rises by faith above its deadly malice, and lays hold on the Lord's strength, and reposes on his promise : when that strength also is manifested, and that promise fulfilled, in the super-human endurance of the weakest trembler ; and the joyous alacrity with which death in its most hideous forms is welcomed, because to depart is to be with Christ. Once it was given to a terrified Israelite to obtain a glimpse of the dazzling hosts of heaven, majestically encamped around the prophet of the Lord, to deliver him from his pursuers : one little moment were those favoured eyes freed from the mists of earth, and strengthened to behold the flashing brightness of that terribly glorious array ; for " Behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire round about Elisha." No such open vision has been vouchsafed during this suffering dispensation ; but we know assuredly that still as of old, " The angel of the Lord encampeth about them that fear him, and delivereth them ;" and we may,—as believers we must,—add to the sad and sorrowful pageantry of earth the undiscovered glories that in deep and true reality abide where the believer dwells, and which wait but the moment of his mortal dissolution to burst in all their ravishing splendour on his gaze, to wrap him in their own celestial panoply, and to enrol him in their blessed company for ever.

There is yet a needful caution to be observed, when

investing any community with the name and character of the Lord's witnessing Church. We must not lose sight of the cautionary parable which instructs us, that when a field has been sown with pure wheat by the hand of the Divine husbandman, the enemy will watch his opportunity to mingle as plentifully as he can, the worthless and deceptive tares that equally grieve and perplex the Lord's faithful servants. These are not, in the general course of God's providential dealings, rooted up at once, but are left to the great day of separation. And not only in the parable, but in other parts of scripture, we are warned of the existence of such incongruities in the composition of what, as a distinct body, we are justified in calling a truly spiritual church, with a pointed reference too to the prominent position to be occupied by that protesting and suffering congregation. Thus in Daniel, "And they that understand among the people shall instruct many ; yet they shall fall by the sword, and by flame, by captivity and by spoil, many days. Now when they fall, they shall be holpen with a little help, but *many shall cleave to them with flatteries*. And some of them of understanding *shall fall*, to try them, and to purge, and to make them white, even to the time of the end."

And again, our Lord repeats the warning: "Then shall they deliver you up to be afflicted, and shall kill you ; and ye shall be hated of all nations for my Name's sake. And then shall many be offended, and shall betray one another, and shall hate one another. And *many false prophets shall arise, and shall deceive*

many : and because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold."

Such, alas ! has been, and such ever will be the case while Satan remains at large, with power to exercise his subtle craft, by transforming himself into the semblance of an angel of light, and his ministers into ministers of righteousness. Is there a congregation among ourselves that would not, if individually called over, and examined with the keen eye of a scrutinizing foe, furnish some instance of unholy living, accompanied with a practical denial of truths formally confessed by the lips, and affording a sample sufficient to condemn the whole company if it could but be proved that all his fellow-worshippers resembled him ? When the faithful preacher addresses himself to impenitent sinners, hardened rebels, or hypocritical pretenders, who yield a lip-service in which their hearts have no part, is he ever able to persuade himself that even amid the limited numbers then present before him, no conscience will bear secret testimony to the justness of such description ? If it be thus in a land of full spiritual freedom, and where the light of revelation encounters no intercepting clouds to bar its free course, what must we expect to meet with, in records penned by adverse hands, purporting to be those of a poor limited company of witnesses against the wicked spirits who then ruled in all the high places of the earth ? Even a child may discern at a glance that the policy of Satan was obviously to put forward some rank tares in the field of wheat, and to obtain a judgment of his own suggesting, not only on their individual quality, but on

their perfect resemblance to all that grew around them : as a justification of the sentence that doomed them to be all cut down together in one premature, indiscriminate harvest of death. A vast deal of learning and laborious research have been expended in controversial investigations of this subject : which is, after all, only to be rightly apprehended by admitting freely the pure light of Divine truth into an arena where the respective combatants are too ready to assail each other in the dark, with weapons as carnal as the hottest forge of persecuting cruelty could make them : what else are the annals of superstitious monks, mercenary apostates, and sanguinary inquisitors, from which are drawn the particulars of this fearful epoch ?

From such doubtful disputations we, however, mean to stand aloof. Our business is to deal with facts. We find a nominally ecclesiastical ruler, sitting in the seat, and invested with the power and great authority that once belonged to the pagan emperors of ancient Rome, the unquestionable instruments of Satanic cruelty, fraud, violence, and blasphemy. We recognise in him every mark with which the spirit of prophecy has branded the great Apostacy that was to work dire havoc among the flock of Christ, and to make war with the saints, to wear them out, to persevere for a long course of time, even to the actual silencing, for a limited space, their public testimony. We find the same ruler suddenly gathering his forces, and investing with the character of a holy war the merciless enterprise, inasmuch that to take part in it was to purchase pardon for all the sins of a long life at the hand of this impious pre-

tender to divine authority ; we behold him precipitating them upon a province belonging to one of his ten vassal kings, carrying utter desolation through it, " by the sword and by flame, by captivity and by spoil," for " many days:" even until there was none left of those who had provoked the visitation by professing a faith consistent with what was once delivered to the saints, and therefore necessarily opposed to his own most blasphemous perversion of that faith by means of such doctrines and such practices as turned the truth of God into a lie. Moreover, we find the people so " persecuted" unto the death, uniformly " reviled " by writers on the adverse side ; their names " cast out as evil," and a sustained attempt made to render them " hated of all nations" even to remote posterity, by bringing against them accusations similar to those brought against their Divine Master, who was denounced as gluttonous and a wine-bibber ; and accused of having a devil : who was arraigned on a charge of combined sedition and blasphemy, and put to death by the Roman power, on such testimony as could not even wear a semblance of agreement with itself, much less of criminating weight against the innocent victim. In all this we trace an accumulation of predicted signs, not to be brought together by any ingenuity of man ; nor by such ingenuity at its utmost stretch to be explained away. Men who, either to protect a secret ally, or to uphold some favourite scheme of interpretation peculiar to themselves, would draw a veil over the great papal apostacy, concealing from our sight its most unmistakeable features, in order to prepare us for a different manifestation of

the long-doomed Man of Sin, may be tempted to avail themselves of the railing accusations brought against our martyred brethren by men more daring than angels are (Jude 9) ; nay, gravely to adduce and to adopt the flagitious records of the murderous Inquisition, noted down from the delirious exclamations of victims lying on the rack, and echoing unconsciously, or alike unconsciously assenting to, the wily promptings of their diabolical torturers ; or else duly coined, to meet any possible emergency of future investigation, if, peradventure, God should raise up an avenger of innocent blood, with power to call them to account for their tremendous enormities. Into no such track are we in danger of straying : we have no human system to uphold, or historical evidence to explain away ; but simply adhering to the fact that " thus it was written," and thus it behoved the people of Christ to suffer with him, preparatory to their future participation in his glorious reign, we would pursue the story ; not unmindful of the farther analogy, that THEY suffered also at the hand of the Beast, when recently installed in the full plenitude of that sovereignty of old exercised by the Dragon, who condemned, and tortured, and crucified Him.

If the blood of the martyrs may be called the seed of the church, the persecution that follows their survivors may also be regarded as the wind commissioned to scatter that seed, and to carry it into places already prepared for its reception. " Wind and storm, fulfilling God's word," though terrible, are precious agents in the vast, mysterious laboratory where His unseen hand directs every process with unerring skill. It is beauti-

ful to contemplate the rising of a little church, like a tender plant, in some sequestered nook, where bright sunbeams visit it in the morning, and gentle dews of heaven fall softly at evening's close, and nothing intervenes to check its prosperous growth through all the early stages of vegetable life. Summer advances; the bud is formed, the flower expands, and many a roving bee perchance alights, extracting nurture from its pleasant hoard, then wings his way enriched with spoil that no rude robber's eye could have discovered, nor the hand of plunder grasped. Thus it flourishes, and in due season the ripening seeds attain maturity, ready to burst their pods, and to fall within the narrow circuit of their own light shadow around the parent stem. But God will propagate the goodly plant in other soils; at his word the stormy wind ariseth; and while the forest-tree that sheltered it perhaps bends and breaks, and falls to overwhelm it, the delicate germs of the crushed flower beneath are borne aloft by the breath of that destructive gale, and flee before it to other lands, even to the place which God hath appointed them; and there they fall unseen, and slowly vegetate beneath the surface, and spring up, men know not how, in a place where nothing resembling them hath ever been known to flourish.

If ever there was a race to which this comparison might be said to apply, it surely was that ultimately known as THE ALBIGENSES. A church, indeed, not a race of men, we must account them; for they replenished many a waste place upon the earth, not by peopling it with successive generations of their own stock, but by

leaving here and there a root of God's own planting, by means that he alone could provide, which grew distinct from all around it, fulfilled its mission, and was gone by means of his overruling. And then we are left to search about for the next manifestation of that undying power with which He has invested the branch of his planting; and in some distant land, perhaps, too, under a wholly dissimilar name, we recognize this work of his hands, in which he is perpetually glorified.

Thus it was, and thus indeed it must need have been throughout the dark ages of universal delusion, when they who arrogated an exclusive title to the name and offices of the Christian Church, made inquest as diligent for the true followers of the Lord as did Herod for the infant Messiah Himself; and with purpose no less deadly. Every plant that God had planted, it was their business to root up; and the long continuance in any place of a community essentially Christian, must have involved the interposition of a miraculous power not openly vouchsafed to the present dispensation. Accordingly we must not expect to meet with a church in its purity, otherwise than of a migratory character; and where we find one permanently abiding in populous places, we may be assured that much of alloy must have entered into its composition, inducing compromises, and tolerating abuses dangerous to its very existence; and calling for some searching process of trial and separation. In all this we trace a work divinely wise and good, by which He who taught his apostles to be jealous over the early churches with a godly jealousy, still pre-

serves his spouse in the purity of her faith and love, even though it be by suddenly and severely snatching her out of the midst of perils from which she could not have extricated herself, and from temptations where no other door of escape was set open. When the Lord's way is altogether in the sea, and his path in the deep waters, so that his footsteps cannot be known, we are bound to rest in the assurance that all his works are righteous, and to say, "Thou art good, and doest good:" but it is cheering to trace, when we are permitted so to do, the course of his providence by the gleaming light that his own word throws upon it.

Some "plant of a noble vine, wholly a right seed," was long secretly growing up in the heart of those Southern Provinces of France which afterwards yielded so awful a harvest of blood. The soil was perhaps not unfavourable to its reception, compared with others: for, like the church of ancient Britain, these dioceses had offered a prolonged resistance to the encroaching usurpations to the Bishop of Rome; and though their independence had been crushed, and the universal yoke laid upon their reluctant shoulders, there lingered amongst them, no doubt, deep traits of what is hard to eradicate, where it has once been planted in faith, and watered by prayer—even that freedom wherewith Christ had made their fathers free. Yet the revival was attributed, and no doubt justly, to foreign influence: a people had settled among them, driven from other lands by the persecuting sword, who worshipped God in spirit and in truth: being branded as heretics by the princes of this world; a sect everywhere spoken against,

to whose charge were laid things that they knew not, because those who sought occasion against them could find no real fault, nothing to allege but an exemplary devotion to the law of their God, and they were therefore constrained to heap upon them accusations utterly devoid of any foundation ; as had been the practice of ancient Rome in dealing with the primitive church. Indeed, the same crimes were specified, or enormities very similar to those attributed to the early martyrs : Manicheism, in which they generally summed them up, being a tissue of kindred abominations. So early as the year 1165, the date of their original settlement as enlightened believers, walking contrary to the doctrines of the papacy, had become obscure : their enemies could not ascertain it. In a canon of the council of Tours this is virtually admitted. "In the country about Toulouse," says this document, "there sprung up *long ago* a damnable heresy, which by little and little, like a cancer, spreading itself to the neighbouring places, in Gascoigne, had already infected many other provinces ; which whilst, like a serpent, it hid itself in its own windings and twinings, crept on more secretly, and threatened more danger to the simple and unwary. Wherefore we do command all bishops and priests dwelling in these parts, to keep a watchful eye upon these heretics, and under the pain of excommunication, to forbid all persons, as soon as these heretics are discovered, from presuming to afford them any abode in their country, or to lend them any assistance, or to entertain any commerce with them in buying or selling ; so that at least by the loss of the advantages

of human society they may be compelled to repent of the error of their life. And if any prince, making himself partaker of their iniquity, shall endeavour to oppose these decrees, let him be struck with the same anathema. And if they shall be seized by any Catholic prince, and cast into prison, let them be punished by confiscation of all their goods : and because they frequently come together from divers parts into one hiding-place, and because they have no other ground for dwelling together save only their agreement and consent in error ; therefore we will, that such their conventicles be both diligently searched after, and when they are found, that they be examined according to canonical severity."

In this brief extract, what a picture is presented to the mind's eye of the adverse parties referred to ! On the one hand we have the dragon's voice, proceeding from beneath the lamb's horns, proclaiming "that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark or the number of the beast," which these harmless sojourners had not. We see him exercising, in daring usurpation, the authority of Him who alone is "Prince of the kings of the earth ;" and extending this anathema with all its fearful accompaniments of deposition and death, to any sovereign who should presume to throw the shield of his royal clemency over subjects dwelling within his own territories ; at the same time dictating to such as were willing to be the tools of this Antichristian cruelty, the mode to be adopted in dealing with their prisoners : namely, that evidence should be sought for of their having lived in Christian communion with

brethren, partakers of the same precious faith, and on such evidence they were to be punished, not according to the civil or criminal code of the country, but with CANONICAL severity : a phrase, the full purport of which we shall better understand in pursuing the history.

On the other hand, we see the accused, as described by their enemies, dwelling quietly, giving none offence, earning their sustenance by lawful merchandize, and assembling together, not to promote disaffection to any constituted authority, not to stir up strife, or to plot any mischievous device whatsoever, but simply because there existed among them one heart, one mind, and one faith. "They have," says this canon, "no other ground for dwelling together save only their agreement and consent in error"—that is, in the pure doctrine of the gospel of Jesus Christ, who has left on record a mark of true discipleship thus unwittingly recognized by the persecutor of his church. "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye love one another:" and in like manner we are enabled to account for the rapid spread of the truth by means so silent, so unobtrusive, and to their adversaries so inexplicable. It was in answer to the Redeemer's prayer, "That they all may be one ; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us ; *that the world may believe that thou hast sent me.*" Holding the faith in unity of spirit, in the bond of peace, and in righteousness of life, this little company, as a candle of the Lord's lighting, shone in a dark place ; and many were thereby won to cast away the works of dark-

ness ; and to join themselves unto them, in reality and truth ; some, no doubt, shamed or persuaded into an external reformation of manners, rested there, unchanged in heart, to fall before the first temptation, when persecution should arise because of the word, and so to bring scandal on the holy cause to which they had never been really devoted ; and perhaps, to become accusers of the brethren, confirming by feigned confessions under their assumed character the cruel calumnies of the enemy. Others, again, acted the part so frequent in the Romish community, of which we find an example in the ancient enemies of our Lord, who “sent forth spies, which would feign themselves just men, that they might take hold of his words, so that they might deliver him to the power and authority of the Governor. And they asked him, saying, Master, we know that thou sayest and teachest rightly, neither acceptest thou the person of any, but teachest the way of God truly.” He to whom these deceivers came, “perceived their craftiness, and said, Why tempt ye me ?” but no such heart-searching power was conferred on his poor followers in after days, when wolves in sheep’s clothing thus entered their humble fold, and were received by the confiding flock as being of themselves. Beyond what will ever be found cleaving to man in the flesh, even the corrupt inheritance of a nature striving against the sanctifying Spirit, these masked inquisitors found nothing whereon to ground an accusation ; but they were enabled to ascertain the precise character of doctrines universally held by the true professors of a pure faith, and to mark out the promi-

ment points of their opposition to the tenets of Rome. At the same time they enjoyed, and no doubt made the most of, many opportunities of speciously introducing unsound opinions, and teaching things contrary to the faith that they falsely professed to hold. For, be it remembered, the emissaries chosen for such work are always men of learning, skill, and subtilty, combined with hardness of heart, and obduracy of mind, sufficiently proved to serve as a guarantee against the intrusion of compunctious visitings, or any faltering in their wicked purpose.

Thus beset on all sides, while as yet they apprehended no evil, but dwelt lovingly in the midst of a population remarkable all over the world for its refinement, and devotion to the gentler arts; a land of painting and poetry and song, a land of vines and fig-trees, and all the features of luxuriant beauty that could combine to mould the characters of its inhabitants into that pliability which, to the eye of man, promises little of resistance when a sterner force is brought to bear upon it; the little church of the Lord's hidden ones was marked out for an easy prey. While the carnal weapon was whetted to its keenest edge, other and more insidious modes of injury were adopted, and the whole machinery of injustice brought into such effectual operation as proved the little sacerdotal horn to be a worthy off-shoot from the forehead of the original Beast, the mighty pagan empire, which was not only strong and terrible to break in pieces and to devour, but also remarkable for stamping the residue under his defiling feet. As the voracious serpent draws

his unclean saliva over the victim that he is about to devour, so with the polluting exudations of its calumnious tongue, did this destroyer besmear its destined prey. History finds it still in a measure adhering to the memory of the dead who died in the Lord ; and with it finds also the emphatic solution of what might otherwise be embarrassing. " The disciple is not above his Master, nor the servant above his lord : it is enough for the disciple that he be as his Master, and the servant as his lord. If they have called the Master of the house Beelzebub, how much more must they call them of his household ? Fear them not, therefore : for there is nothing covered that shall not be revealed, nor hid that shall not be known.

Abundantly supplied as the public is with the descriptions of modern travellers, and familiarized too to a great extent by personal observation, with the theatre of this most unholy war, it would now be superfluous to enter upon a minute geographical detail. True it is, that some of our most entertaining tourists, who excel in the minutiae of description, contriving to bring the reader acquainted alike with the features of a landscape and with the individuals who people it, have roamed and rested, looked, and sketched, and written for days together, in the heart of that scenery where it might be supposed that every hill and valley, every streamlet and plain, every old grey ruin and rugged mountain-pass, must necessarily, yea unavoidably, call up the most thrillingly-touching reminiscences in the mind of a Protestant, pervading the narrative with congenial

thoughts and images ; yet have they passed over, as things unknown or unworthy to be remembered, all that related to the "slaughtered saints" of old. We read the familiar names of Toulouse and Foix, of Bezieres and Carcassonne, and perhaps feast our eyes on some spirited sketch of their general outlines and venerable remains : but in vain do we seek for a passing allusion to what invests them with an interest so deep and dear. This is one of the worst signs of that indifferentism which is eating out the very life of our national religion, and smoothing the way of approach for an enemy as insidiously noiseless now, as formerly he was terrific in the broad display of his unbridled ferocity.

However, with so many sources of local information open to all, we need merely to glance at the outline map of those territories through which the sword of bitter persecution cut its sanguinary way. This lay within the Duchies of Aquitaine, Gascoigne and Narbonne ; the Marquisates of Toulouse and Provence, with a small portion of Bearn, and of Basse Navarre. It included the petty sovereignties of Saintonge, Limosin, Perigord, Auvergne, Velay, Agen, Quercy, Rouergue, Gevaudan, and Alby, in Aquitaine ; Bourdelois, Armagnac, Fezensac, Astarac, Bigorre, Comminges, and Conserans, in Gascoigne ; Uzès, Nismes, Lodeve, Maguelonne, Beziers, Agde, Narbonne, Fenouilledes, and Roussillon, in Narbonne ; Toulouse, Carcassonne, Rozes, and Foix, in Toulouse ; and in Provence, Viennois, Valentinois, Vivarois, and Arles. The southern boundary of this memorable district is lost among the moun-

tain masses of the Pyrennees, and the waters of the Golf de Lion: clusters of those majestic heights also stretching along the eastern borders of Toulouse and Aquitaine, and cutting across the latter towards the north-west, in a wild, irregular ridge: Narbonne, and the eastern side of the boundaries in Provence, are likewise mountainous: the remaining, and by far the larger portion, of the scene of war, is comparatively a level.

Although these lands all lay within the limits of France, the powerful lords who divided them among themselves yielded allegiance, some to England, but the greater number to the Spanish king of Arragon. This, however, matters little to our purpose: the contest was not between rival monarchs, nor was its object the occasion of territorial dominion. Not the king of France, but the bishop of Rome, unfurled the standard of exterminating war; and although it ended in establishing the rule of the former over a desolate, depopulated country, it opened with no other purpose than to hunt and destroy the scattered sheep of Christ's fold; in scriptural language, "the beast made war with the saints to overcome them."

Fertile, beautiful, and undisturbed by internal dissensions; the land was as the garden of Eden compared with what its destroyers made it. There was, indeed, too much of outward peace, too much of carnal security, and of the luxurious indulgences that always prove inimical to the spiritual welfare of those who long recline in the sunshine of cloudless prosperity. The Provençals had become famous throughout Europe for

the refinement of their taste, and their unrivalled attainments in all that art and literature could boast in an age of overspreading darkness, the natural result of monkish superstition and prostration of intellect beneath the despotism of ecclesiastical usurpation. This enlightenment had spread into surrounding districts, and blended as it was with higher, purer rays of spiritual brightness, unknown in other lands, we cannot marvel that its brilliancy attracted the frowning gaze of those who hated every light that emanated not from the sparks of their own kindling : sparks of a fire that burns, but cannot illumine, either the spirit or the mind.

The various nobles among whom the land was partitioned, though they did homage to the monarch, each reigned as a king over his own portion. His palace was a castle, generally in a fortified town, the capital of his little state. He marshalled an army of disciplined vassals and free citizens, with their knightly commanders and officers ; exercising alike in military and in civil matters an authority that scarcely brooked the intervention of any higher power, save that terrible engine of universal tyranny, 'the Church,' as it was falsely called. Neither before the sceptre of France, nor that of England, nor of Arragon, nor of imperial Germany, did the spirit of those princely nobles quail : allegiance they owed, and each was ready, on demand, to head an armed force, and march to his sovereign's aid ; or to assist in his councils, or promote in any way his royal interests. But to cow them into trembling submission, to herd them together like frightened deer,

or to intimidate them severally into the surrender of their just rights, and the abandonment of their lawful heritages to a foreign spoiler, it was needful to unfurl the banner of the cross against {them : to invade their territories by a company of cowled priests ; or to address to them a pastoral exhortation from one who called himself 'servant of the servants of God.' There were few, if any, among them, who feared man ; there were few, it is to be apprehended, who feared God ; but if there was one who caused it to be surmised that he feared not the bishop of Rome, we shall presently read his name and history in characters traced by his own warm life-blood.

In this characteristic feature of the chiefs, their people participated just in proportion as the light of the Gospel had failed to penetrate their homes and hearts. They were all attached by duty, and the majority of them by grateful affection, to the reigning nobles, who allowed them a degree of religious freedom unknown in other countries. The higher classes, conscious of their intellectual superiority, viewed with disdain the ignorant and lazy monks who droned away their lives ; or saw with indignation the riotous waste in which the enormous ecclesiastical revenues of the bishops and superior clergy were squandered, while the natural independence of a cultivated mind rose against their assumptions of a superiority, that on no grounds whatever they could justly claim. The lower orders, where the knowledge of God had not enabled them spiritually to discern the utterly anti-Christian character of the whole system, were yet shocked and disgusted by the scanda-

lous profligacy of life that seemed to cleave as a badge to that order of men who, on the plea of peculiar sanctity, arrogated to themselves the right of lording it over their faith and consciences. None among them were so universally, or so deservedly despised as the Romish clergy : it passed into a proverb : ' I would rather be a priest than do such a thing,' was the most indignant form of denial on the part of any person accused of a criminal or disgraceful action.

This gave the clergy no trouble : their revenues were safe, and all that money could command was within their grasp. A due measure of outward respect was, of course, accorded to the bishop or priest, monk or friar, when he appeared ; its object being the office, not the man. When the Popes were fighting men, and open, unvarnished debauchees, it could not be expected that those who formed the subordinate members where they were the head, should strike into a different path. It could not be expected that the harlot, in the pride of her power, glorying in her shame, her head crowned with universal dominion, her forehead branded with blasphemous mystery, her eyes glaring with drunken rage, her cheeks burning with unholy fires, and her hand lifting high the golden cup of abominations, should divest some of her limbs of their purple and scarlet and gems, to clothe them in linen, outwardly white, if not pure, and by such contrast to heighten the horrors of her general aspect. The inhabitants of those provinces had light enough to see her as she was, and hated if they did not fear her.

Oh for a record, a sketch, a fragment of history per-

taining to the Church of Christ in those days, and in that region, unblotted by the foul pen of calumny and triumphant revenge ! In vain do we sigh for such a relic ; the besom of destruction swept too effectually over the devoted tract ; and we have no archives to search—nothing but the book which an enemy hath written, to guide us in tracing the footsteps of the flock through that dark valley of the shadow of death.

Yet imagination can conceive without overstepping the bounds of sober probability, what was the daily life of a Christian family under the nominal sway of Antichrist. Long neglect on the part of the Roman Pontiffs, who were usually engaged in more important conquests, or immersed in sensuality beyond the power of rousing themselves, had permitted the Gospel to take deep root, to spread widely, and to bear much fruit over a varied tract of country. In high places, in the cathedrals and parish-churches, all went on as usual. Images were set in every niche, tapers lighted before their shrines, votive gifts suspended round them ; and all the services of the Romish ritual duly celebrated. Here, at stated hours, sat the priest in the confessional, ready to dispense absolution to sinners on the accustomed terms : there hung the pix, over the high altar, containing a wafer, to which the special adoration due to ' Saint Sacrament ' might always be directed : there the mass was sung, the censer smoked, the holy water flew right and left, sprinkled by the hand of priestly benediction : and there, at the accustomed seasons, appeared the reigning count, with his knights, burgesses, vassals, and a goodly assemblage of worshippers, all

devoutly engaged, so far as externals went, in worshipping they knew not what. No doubt, many prostrated themselves there who secretly held a purer faith ; and who, if any of the rulers had openly professed a scriptural belief in Christ, would gladly have acknowledged him too,—but of these we cannot speak, otherwise than by a reference to our Lord's emphatic warning, " Whosoever shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven ; but whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven."

There were some who thus openly confessed their crucified Lord, and they were numerous. These gave no heed to the noisy chimes that summoned them to a strange worship : they passed by the open doors of each conspicuous temple, rendering no homage to the idol crucifix, taking no notice of the consecrated water, muttering no prayer to departed saints, nor deeming that aught of holiness belonged either to the building or to any of the uses to which it was applied. Quietly they pursued their way, the father with his matronly partner on his arm, the brother leading the sister, and the little ones of the household treading with subdued looks in the foot-prints of those who preceded them. We may follow them, as they pass along, now jostled by the giddy group who are hurrying to come in for a share of the unmeaning services that speak neither to the heart, nor to the conscience, nor to the understanding ; nor can exert the slightest influence either of direction or restraint, over the course of their wasted lives—

now smiled upon by a passing friend, who knows and respects their scriptural principles, but lacks courage to turn and accompany them,—now greeted by the whispered blessing of a neighbour, who hopes ere evening's close to swell the hymn of praise that will issue from their lips. On they go, grieving over the desecrating frivolities, or the eager spirit of worldly business, that perpetually break down the barriers placed by the Lord around his day of rest ; and which, strong as adamant, in the view of a believer, are regarded by the disciples of Rome as cobweb threads, intrusively thrown across their path.

Our Albigenic patriarch has now conducted his little party beyond the utmost boundary of the village town ; and very lovely is the landscape that opens to their eye, resting in that sweet Sabbath repose which is breathed upon it neither from the skies above, nor from the earth beneath, but from the heart of him who contemplates it through the medium of a divine ordinance. The sunbeam seems to fall more broadly, the trees to spread more gracefully their welcome shade. The hills rise, as if aspiring to an altitude that should bring them nearer heaven ; the little flowers deck the earth as though to brighten her Sunday robe ; and the streamlet as it murmurs by speaks of the bounteous hand that bade it gush for man's refreshment. Far as the eye can reach, the vineyards stretch along the hilly slope, spreading their clusters to the ray ; and then, on the other side, a strip of level land is covered with verdant pasturage, where the flock and the herd browse unmolested, and for a time unwatched ; for the shepherd

boy has asked and gained a few hours' holiday, not that he may join in the gambols of some thoughtless group, intent only on making themselves merry, but because he loves the company of those who forsake not the assembling of themselves together for purposes congenial to the hallowed season.

Down in yonder shaded nook, where the broad chestnut spreads his venerable branches, and forms a graceful canopy, an open shed stands, lightly thatched, and forming a shelter, in the grape season, for some of the operations connected with that branch of agriculture. Here, on seats as rustic and as various as could well be collected together, are placed a number of females of every age, generally, though not exclusively, of humble station, who wait in sober silence, or in pleasant converse on holy subjects, the completion of their party. Men, youths, and boys are scattered about ; some seated on the ground, some leaning against the light pillars of the shed, others pacing the green sward, in quiet, yet animated discourse on the things that belong unto their peace. Our pedestrians take their accustomed station, and shortly after their arrival appears the pastor of the expectant flock. He has no robing-room, no sacristy, to screen his mysterious preparations for the office whereunto the Lord hath called him. Clad in the simplest habiliments of a travelling dealer in miscellaneous wares, with manners as artless as his apparel is unstudied, and wearing as his only badge of office, that crown of glory which a hoary head found in the way of righteousness confers on its possessor, he advances with looks of beaming affection, and gives the salutation of

"Peace be to you," which every heart and every tongue re-echoes with an application to himself.

He has been on an embassy, through many leagues of territory, bartering his simple wares, and using the opportunities thus obtained for speaking the gospel of the grace of God in many a mansion where such language was never heard before. He has trod the stately halls of the proud Chateau, and while his fabric of home-made lace attracted the eye of the courtly dame, he has filled her ear with sounds most strangely new ; even that God so loved the world as to give his own Son, to die for sinners like her ; and that "the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from ALL sin ;" and on that mighty "all" he has expatiated, until the pilgrimages and penances, and purgatorial fires of Rome's lucrative fable seemed as,—what they are—a mocking lie, to cheat the soul of its free and full salvation. Many a sweet tale has the missionary pedlar to tell, of "seed sown in desolate places;" and then they all kneel down, and pray to Him that sitteth in the heavens, that He will cause the gentle dew of His spirit to fall, and fertilize the ground, until plants arise, and fruit appear, to His glory.

After this, songs of praise are sung : confession of sin is made to Him who "willeth not the death of a sinner;" and many a sob of repentance is turned into the prayer of believing hope, as the sure word of promise is dwelt upon, and its balm applied to the wounded conscience. They strengthen themselves in the Lord ; they build themselves up on their most holy faith ; and with eager delight they listen to the well-worn

manuscript again produced for their edification, where a portion of the inspired word was inscribed by the hand of a faithful copier, who found the original document becoming illegible from constant use. This leads to exhortation, founded on the word ; and again they pray, again they join their voices in a chorus of praise, that the little hills around them seem delighted to adopt, re-echoing it in half-breathed echoes of their own. Much is said of the evils among which they dwell ; much of the wolfish character of some who assume the clothing of sheep. Words of warning are spoken to the young ; words of encouragement to all.

Perchance even in that little congregation some unsuspected traitor might lurk, taking heed to what was said, not for his soul's profit, but for the destruction of his companions. Some there might also be, as yet sincere in their profession, who would, when the storm fell upon them, flee from the sheltering Rock to rest on a fleshly arm, and perish. But to the Searcher of hearts alone, were the hearts of the little assemblage laid open : only the eye of Omniscience could descry their future path ; and as they separated, to wend in groups, or singly, along the diversified paths of that sunny landscape, they looked as peaceful, and as fearless of approaching harm, as the quiet goats that browsed on the hill-side, and scarcely raised an eye to glance at the approaching way-farers.

They passed a stone cross, rudely constructed, perhaps, with its attendant niche for the statue of the Virgin. No hat was raised, no head or knee was bowed ; no imaginary cross was figured on the breast. What

had they to do with idols, who had been worshipping the living God in the spirit, and in the beauty of holiness? They passed on, and sought their several dwellings. Scattered over the earth, of which they were the salt, they withstood, in their quiet efficiency, the spreading of corruption. Woe to the land where such salt hath lost its savour!



CHAPTER SECOND.



ANTICHRIST.





CHAPTER II.

ANTICHRIST.

WE now change the scene. No longer by the mountain-side, or down into the valley, or through green pastures and among clustering vines lies our secluded path : halls of grandeur, surpassing the ordinary work of man,

rich with Parian marble, interspersed with ivory and alabaster ; sumptuous hangings, where mouldings of burnished gold peep forth amid the sweeping festoons of purple and crimson ; tapestry, the rarest that could be culled from Saracenic spoils ; and sculpture of unequalled beauty, in every form that art might borrow from creation's wonders,—all this, and more than all that modern fancy may body forth from the luxurious shadows of antique magnificence, we shall encounter while pacing the wide saloons, and vaulted corridors, and mounting the broad marble stairs, all studded with the trophies of a prostrate world, in a thousand varied forms of costliness and grace. But among them we will not pause ; the foot falls noiselessly now on carpets of delicate texture, a luxury unknown as yet in many king's houses ; and we approach a retired apartment, where splendour holds but the second rank, its prominent feature being that of studious comfort and convenience, in their most perfect manifestation. The mellow light falls softly on a spacious board formed of some precious wood, and covered with purple cloth, of which the golden fringe nearly sweeps the ground ; and this is piled with manuscripts, and documents of various bulk, from the thick volume of Roman and of Grecian lore, to the familiar letter, and its half-completed reply now thrown aside for more important avocation.

And who is he, the presiding spirit of the studious, solitary scene ? There is that in it and in him which bespeaks him lord of the palace through which we have trod ; master of the mighty accumulation of wealth,

and luxury, and voluptuous gratifications. The guards who, in gorgeous attire, passed and repassed before the stately portals of this royal abode, were surely guarding him : the throng of officials hovering about us as we came along, were doing his will and waiting his commands : the singing-men and singing-women, whose melodious voices we heard in rehearsal of their evening's task, were preparing strains of harmony to delight his ear : the glittering preparations of a banquet fitted for an assemblage of eastern monarchs, were surely made that he might feast, while the tabret and the viol, and the song, heightened the sensual allurements of the hour. There is nothing that the lust of the flesh can crave, nothing to satiate the lust of the eye, nothing that the haughtiest pride of living man may grasp to elevate him on the pinnacle of human greatness, and lap him in the fullest enjoyment of mortal delights, but we have traced it, spread within the beck of this man. Yet his aspect is not that of a reveller ; the line traced on a cheek still fresh with the bloom of young life, has not been imprinted there by the finger of debauchery ; the fire of the drunkard is not that which flashes from his dark Italian eye ; and the tonsured head, from which the silken cap is laid aside that the soft breeze from yonder open casement may fan its circle of raven locks, bespeaks a character of elevated tone, deep thought, expansive intellect, and a resolve that mocks the idle dream of opposition.

That man is Lotharius, Count de Signi, and his indeed is all that we have described and surmised. This haughty palace, with all its magnificence is his ; and at

his command, every gratification that sense can crave is ready to surround him. But such is not his choice ; he aims at a wider mark, and will seize a mightier prey.

Rudely stretched on a skin of vellum, according to the imperfect knowledge of those days, there lies beside him a chart of the world : and he will not pause, nor slack his hand, while throughout its boundaries there exists a state unconscious of his power, or daring to raise an obstacle in the path of his supreme will. Mark him, as with sternly placid brow he bends over the paper spread before him, and engrosses with steady energy the customary commencement of a fulmination, at sight of which some monarch shall quake upon his throne, "INNOCENT, servant of the servants of God." Few months have passed since the triple tiara was placed upon his head, and the forged keys committed to his resolute grasp ; and already has he caused it to be felt throughout Europe, that a master's hand has seized the reins of spiritual dominion, with full purpose of adding thereto the utmost stretch of temporal despotism. He is preparing for a vast campaign, his battle-field is the wide earth ; and knowing that by the salt of the earth alone can the universal corruption that he purposes to establish be resisted, his preliminary work must be to remove that salt : his opening war is a "War with the Saints."

Look again ; view him by the light of Holy Writ, and the pleasant beam of day will fade upon your eye, and the terrible fire of God's wrath will be seen to wrap him round, as a cloak ; as the garment with which he is girded. You see before you the Man of

Sin, the Son of Perdition, engaged in his foreshown work of opposing and exalting himself: one whose coming is after the working of Satan; and whose office it is by all means to extinguish the light that is hated by the prince of darkness. In himself, a weak, a dying man, how terrible, how "strong exceedingly," he becomes, invested with the power, and enthroned as the vicegerent of the god of this world! He has passed from among the crowd of common rebels to assume that fearful headship that maintains a succession of men, as it were one man, in that place where the dragon hath given him "his power, and seat, and great authority." He holds them now; beneath him, and around him, swell the seven hills of "that great city which ruleth over the kings of the earth." The very demons to whom the Pagans of ancient Rome burnt incense and sacrificed, are there upon their pedestals; their titles only being changed, to those of the Lord Jesus Christ, and his apostles, and the lowly virgin of whose mortal substance his human body was made; while an honour no less idolatrous is still rendered to the senseless blocks. There, where the river of mystic Babylon, the Tiber, rolls sluggishly along, the captives of Judah sit and weep, in sorrow that the lapse of nearly twelve centuries has not mitigated, but rather increased; for the sword of papal Rome is keener, and her scourge more knotted, than when the sanguinary heathen wielded them over the exiled and afflicted people of the Lord. Neither in name nor in nature, is Rome changed: the wolf's milk seems yet to sustain the savage principle within: and the stain of fratricidal blood that moist-

ened her first foundations, yet stands, indelible as the mark of Cain, perpetually renewed upon her brow.

But this man, this Innocent, what is he about ? Enthroned as the deputed minister of Satan, but blasphemously assuming to be the representative of Christ, he is about exercising the power of the Evil One under the name of the Most Holy One. He has glanced over the rough chart beside him, and revolved in his penetrating, comprehensive mind, the internal affairs of each several kingdom ; and he perceives that, to carry out his ambitious designs, he must unite the various sovereigns in some general object, which, while in itself calculated to minister to his ambitious purposes, shall also divert their attention and withdraw their military force, if not their personal superintendence also, from their respective territories. The destined theatre of this simultaneous movement is Palestine—whitened as its stricken plains and desolate mountains are with the bones of former victims, immolated in the insane crusades. Insane indeed they were, as regards their ostensible object, held as real by the dupes who undertook them ; but deeply politic as planned by those who, while stirring up the minds of their unconscious tools to the seemingly pious enterprise of rescuing the holy city from its paynim lords, really aimed at the triumphant establishment of Rome's supremacy throughout the East, on the wrecks of the Grecian Empire.

But to this man of sin, and of iniquitous mystery, it would seem a small matter to arm another crusade, however extensive and powerful, if, while the princes

of Europe were employed, at the head of their armaments, in extending the empire of the mighty lie abroad, truth should continue to make its quiet way among the homesteads of their several domains. Innocent III. was not the man to overlook the infancy of aught that might grow to a dangerous form, if left to mature itself; he knew that a single copy of the word of God, privately circulated in a rural district, might shake the pillars of his throne, and grind his gigantic power into dust. He therefore determined that the first crusade undertaken by his command, should be by each prince against his own subjects, wheresoever the faintest glimmering of a true faith had been detected throughout his realms of darkness. Already had the flames of martyrdom begun to light the sky, in places where the number of suspected believers was very small, and where they were easily marked out, and arraigned on false charges, and put to death without exciting either compassion or resentment in the blinded multitudes around them. The German emperor had also placed in his hands an edict for the destruction of those among his subjects in Italy, who, under the name of Paterini, or Gazari, were distinguished as dissenting in many points from the creed of Rome; and where, as in some instances it occurred, the lords who ruled in the provinces showed a disposition to protect this class of their subjects, whom they had ever found the most peaceful, loyal, and industrious, the crafty pontiff neutralized their opposition by tempting their avarice on the one hand, and on the other exciting their fears. He consigned to them, as a legal forfeiture, the entire

possessions of all whom they should destroy as heretics ; and he denounced against them the penalty of excommunication in the event of their favouring the escape of a suspected schismatic. Where the bribe might have failed, the menace triumphed ; for, howsoever lightly some of the barons might have regarded the papal malediction in its spiritual character, they well knew that its promulgation would authorize and even enjoin every neighbouring lord to invade and depose,—every vassal under their rule to waylay and assassinate them.

So far successful, within the first year of his pontificate, has the man now before us been ; and the augury of future triumph sits upon his brow. ‘ Innocent, servant of the servants of God ’ is preparing credentials for his chosen emissaries, now about to depart for the province of Narbonne, which has occasioned him some anxiety since the report of numerous spies confirmed his suspicion that the truth had taken strong and deep root in that province, and he has matured his plan for destroying it. In that document, lengthening under his rapid penmanship, you might read the commission to be conferred on his two delegates, the powers with which he prepares to arm them ; the germ, in fact, of that terrible after-growth, the Inquisition, of which he is to be the actual author : and as he pauses for the ink to dry upon its surface, he spares another momentary glance to the world’s outline, whereon his boundless lust of aggrandisement delights to expatiate ; where he thinks to change times and laws ; where he will depose and create emperors, and play with regal crowns as

with nursery toys. The East—he will overrun and grasp it yet : the Germanic empire shall own no head but of his selecting : that little speck, denoting England,—he will curb its restless spirit of independence, and render its trophied crown a football for his legate. France, Spain, Hungary, the whole circle of surrounding dominions, shall be as a nest of unfledged eagles, upon which the dark shadow of his vulture-power shall rest, until he can say of the terrified inmates, “There was none that peeped, nor moved the wing, nor muttered.”

Strange that a mortal man should possess, and have permission to exercise, a power so vast and so destructive ! It would appear yet more strange to us, if we held not in our hands the solution of the mystery ; his coming is after the working of Satan ; and *his* is “the power, the seat, and the great authority” held for the moment by that selected vicegerent. We must recal the scene of conflict, when our holy Lord Jesus was led of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the Devil, and remember the magnificent bribe that was set before Him : “All the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them,” which were certainly, in a degree to us inexplicable, at the disposal of the Evil One, “the prince of this world,” as our Lord himself designated him ; and still retaining such a mighty power and influence, even after the triumphant resurrection and ascension of his Conqueror, that the apostle could style him “the god of this world,” and represent him as taking captive at his will such as fell into his snares. While, therefore, we contemplate the individual who, as in the

very wantonness of mockery, chose the official appellation of "Innocent," in which to blazon forth his sanguinary guilt, let us remember that we look upon an incarnation of Satan himself; one into whom, as into Judas of old, the evil spirit had entered, stimulating weak mortality to the almost unimaginable supremacy in crime, that could find in the Creator and Redeemer of the world, an object of barter and sale. We are not to enquire, what could Lotharius de Signi achieve? but what could the fallen archangel accomplish, when working in and by a rare combination of those physical and intellectual capacities which were originally fashioned in divine perfection, to show forth the glory and the majesty of Him in whose image man was created; and which still, in the wreck that sin has reduced them to, bear splendid marks of what they once have been? What must that be in the fierceness and pride of its unresisted power, over which in its destined fall all heaven is summoned to rejoice!

There is an awful and a terrible interest in the scene—it can scarcely be called an imaginary one—where we seem to linger. The gorgeousness of the palace, the features of boundless voluptuousness that every where prevail, save in the aspect of its present lord, whose soul is surrendered to the rule of sterner passions; the utter absence of all that might be construed into a semblance of pure and undefiled religion; the proud glaring gaudy contrast to the subdued, unworldly spirit of the doctrine taught by Him who was meek and lowly of heart, and by the simple, unlearned men whom He commissioned to make known to all the world the great

mystery of godliness : these things would strike the mind as remarkable, even were Rome still pagan in name, and the idols that she worships invoked by their original names of Jupiter, Mars, Bacchus, Venus, and the other obscene characters of a foul mythology. But this is not so : the pride, the sensuality, the sloth, the unbounded wickedness that surround us, are exhibited to the world as the adjuncts of Christianity ; yea, to such an extent, that to question the Divine authority here assumed, to doubt whether the remorseless homicide before us is indeed the chosen and anointed delegate of Christ, exercising the fulness of His power, and being head over all things to His body the Church, is ‘ heresy,’ punishable with a cruel death. Perchance some wasted form may cross our path, some poor conscience-stricken sinner, who tries to overcome the tremblings occasioned by a fearful looking-for of judgment and fiery indignation that awaits the transgressor, by fastings and penances, and vigils that have dwindled his body to a shadow, but can bring no ray of peace or hope to his despairing mind : yet still he toils on, in the weary path, and beholds a distant refuge in the promised absolution of this pretender to heavenly powers. Alas ! the victim is perishing with a lie in his right hand.

The task is done : the pontiff rapidly skims over it, and, resuming his cap, arranging his robe, and gathering about him a dignity needful for the occasion, gives a summons that is speedily obeyed by the entrance of two ecclesiastics, who, with the lowliest reverence that man can pay to a superior being, approach within some paces of their brother of the dust ; and there they stand, with

heads bowed down, while the pontifical blessing is pronounced with that impressiveness which a master mind will impart to the action, albeit the spirit may have no part therein. After a pause, he bids them be seated ; and conscious of their value in his eyes, as chosen emissaries in a somewhat difficult field of labour, they lay aside the embarrassing sense of a presumed unapproachable distance, which probably they do not feel, and listen while Innocent breathes forth the paternal sorrows of his heart, over the wrongs inflicted on their holy religion by heretics who corrupt the faith, and draw others aside from the right way. In all his pious affliction, brother Guy and brother Regnier sympathize, declaring with what eagerness they have obeyed his mandate, leaving the cloistered solitudes of Citeaux, and all the peaceful privileges of monkish life, to do his bidding as good soldiers of the cross, in the unsettled province of Narbonne.

Then follow their instructions ; and marvellous it is, how soon the tones of pious lamentation strengthen and deepen into those of most energetic command. The pontiff shews himself intimately acquainted with the nature and the seat of the malady, and most unflinchingly decided as to the mode of cure. They are to traverse the infected districts, and by every means that power, craft, wealth, and skill can supply, to discover the holders of heretical doctrines. They are to establish tribunals, the most irresponsibly despotic that can be devised, before which the accused must be arraigned ; and to carry out to the full whatever sentence is considered advisable, they are invested with the plenitude of

authority enjoyed by the holy see—an authority that vaunts to enclose within its grasp not only earth, but heaven and hell. No appeal is left : from their decisions appeal is not permitted ; and on their part no appeal is required. Confiscation, imprisonment, torture, exile, and the stake, are in their hands, to wield against men's bodies ; and at the voice of their excommunicating curse, the pit of perdition is to unfold its jaws, and swallow up the condemned soul. They are, moreover, to preach vehemently, stirring up the rage of all true Christians against their neighbours, and publicly to entangle in the subtleties of logical disputation such as may venture to avow their opinions. They are to convict them, if possible, of direct opposition to the mind and will of the Church ; and to seize the moment of such public exposure to exasperate against them the more consistent upholders of that dreaded authority. Many admonitions and suggestions, full of the wisdom that cometh not from above, but which in its earthly, sensual, devilish subtlety frequently overreaches and confounds the children of light, does the pontifical instructor bestow on his eager listeners ; who, with years and experience much beyond his own, and with a full measure of learning and talent, are far behind him in intellectual power, and still further in that unshrinking spirit of fearless determination that will openly and unwaveringly pursue its one defined object, though the thrones of monarchs, and the bodies and souls too of their countless subjects, must be crushed under his advancing tread. A noble model for two aspiring monks to study ! a bright example of the faith which he is in-

citing them to maintain, and to establish by espionage and dissimulation ; by lying sophistry and suborned evidence ; by the fetter, the dungeon, the rack, and the flame.

Nothing is left unsaid, to prepare them for this work ; they are encouraged to propose questions, in matters of imaginary difficulty possible to occur, that he may solve them ; and to exhibit in their most formidable aspect all supposable obstacles, that he may instruct them, not only how to conquer, but how to turn them all to advantage. Never was counsel more eagerly taken against the poor scattered flock of the Lord's pasture, than while those three men arranged the cautious opening of a campaign, that was to issue in exterminating warfare ; and they leave at length that august presence, so replete with thoughts, and schemes, and auguries of triumph, that while they slowly retrace, side by side, the stately approaches to the scene of audience, scarcely are they tempted to cast a wandering glance on the marvels that surround them ; their cowed brows being bent still lower to smother the whispered tones that mutually recount the heads of their instructions, or prophecy of the probable events of that long vista of dominion which the natural turn of man's life opens to the vigorous mind and robust constitution of Lotharius de Signi. Perchance each secretly carves out for himself a sway, if less extensive, equally despotic, over the provinces to which they are now to repair ; and, perchance, it is suggested to their ambitious minds that one of them may yet live to snatch the powerful keys that hands not less nervous than those recently uplifted

to bless them, have oft let fall under the operation of some deadly draught. For, what other guerdon has the apostate Church to offer to her unscrupulous officials, than the attainment of honours, and wealth, and lordly sway, among the kingdoms of this world ?

Arriving at the outer portal of the Vatican, we can but look back upon its walls, and say, that, upon earth, Satan never prevailed to frame so mighty a laboratory of sin. The perfection of its machinery is wonderful, even under the presiding influence of spirits far inferior to that of Innocent III. In the stupendous forgery there perpetually carried on, every line and character of God's truth is parodied with wonderful skill, that, the original destroyed, men may receive the base fabrication, and believe, not to the saving, but to the destruction of their souls. Its devices are best seen in their public development : and narrative, not declamation, must show them forth : but of the pontiff in his closet, and of those monks now winding their course through the streets of the great city, and of the multitudes for whose slaughtering career they go to prepare the way, we can say, "These shall make war upon the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them ; for He is the King of kings, and Lord of Lords : and they that are with Him"—even the poor harmless helpless ones whom these go forth to destroy—"are called, and chosen, and faithful."

Gladly we turn from the pomp and pride of the splendid city, on whose tall towers and columns of ancient fame, and gigantic ruins of an empire less mighty than that which, under a far different character, yet

almost identically the same in principle and in practice, has succeeded it, to explore again the scene of future persecution, still wrapped in the repose of presumed independence and short-lived peace. The banners that float on the battlements of that princely abode are fanned by the Pyrennean breezes ; and the hands that planted them there are nerved to defend them, as the ensigns of a freedom, the value of which is deeply felt, even when its full extent is not rightly understood : they are guarded by those who have learned to think for themselves ; and who, for the bare assumption of such unauthorized privilege, are already, though secretly condemned as unpardonable rebels against the supremacy of Rome.

Wheresoever the Lord plants a vineyard, there he also builds him a watch-tower. Sometimes a diligent and faithful watchman is placed there, who holds his post as a most sacred trust, for every particular of which he must deliver in a full detail to the eternal King ; and so he watches as one who must give account, that he may be able to do it with joy, and not with grief. Thus a God-fearing monarch, as David, Josiah, Hezekiah, will rule his kingdom ; thus a subordinate prince, his more confined possessions ; thus a devout landholder his patrimonial domain ; and a householder his family. We speak not here of a spiritual surveillance ; not of the vine-dresser or the grape-gatherer ; but of that secular keeping which the ordinary course of this world renders necessary for the preservation of landmarks, and the repulse of foreign assailants, whose object it

might be to rend and to trample down the precious, but weak and fragile plants that constitute the vineyard.

Sometimes, however, that which to man's eye appears the appointed watch-tower, is none other than a lodging for way-faring men, who come and go, in pursuit of their own ends, having no more care or thought for the security of the vineyard than their temporary approximation begets in selfish minds. If they stretch out a protecting hand on its behalf, it is only because the wild boar who comes to trample it down, might, if unresisted, turn his formidable tusks upon themselves, and become exceedingly dangerous to them. Or, at least, a feeling of local attachment, of admiration for its beauty, appreciation of its value, and innate love of justice, may arm their hands in that defence on which they cannot but admit it has a claim. But the higher motive is altogether wanting : their guidance to the spot in danger's hour is indeed providential, like all other things that affect the welfare of the Lord's Church ; but they hold no recognized commission, they look forward to no searching investigation of their proceedings ; and unhappy is he who leans upon them in the hour of calamity.

In such cases, then, where is the true watchman to be found ? Only the eye of faith can discern him ; only the ear of faith can hear his encouraging voice, saying, "The Lord himself is thy keeper : the Lord is thy defence upon thy right hand."

No vineyard was there, perhaps, so extensive, so flourishing, so conspicuously visible, as in the province of Toulouse ; and strange it would have sounded in

many ears to have denied to that stately castle the appellation of a watch-tower, or to Count Raymond the title of a bold, a faithful watchman over the plants so collected and so trained up within the broad bounds of his ancient sovereignty. A sovereign prince indeed he was, a man of war from his youth, asserting and maintaining a lofty independence, neither to be controlled by the monarch who received his nominal homage, nor by the neighbouring princes, who sought by frequent disputes, and many hostile attempts, to humble his pride, or to set narrower limits to his power. The former remained unbent, the latter received continual accessions of strength ; for he gathered around him its various elements, and flourished in the congenial atmosphere. The stately halls of Raymond's castle echoed to the lays of the troubadours ; his revels, divested of the coarser features of a barbarous age, assembled together the fairest of one sex, and the boldest of the other ; while the peculiar refinement, and diffusion of that comparative light which science sheds, so distinctive of the Provençal society, fostered in every bosom a species of vain-glory highly conducive to the popularity of the chief under whose auspices they flourished. To recruit his military forces, he retained in his pay a considerable body of Routiers, an organized banditti, in fact, from the northern parts of Spain, whose habits of plunder he carefully restrained, so far as the general population of the province was concerned, but left them more at large among the ecclesiastics ; the most despised order of men. Churches were forcibly entered, to be despoiled of their gold, and silver, and precious stones ; their rich

vestments, and costly draperies : and many a friar found himself unexpectedly brought within the letter of his vow of poverty, through the marauding exploits of those desperate gangs, who held all religion in supreme contempt : but none sympathized with the sufferers ; they stood as far beyond the pale of Provençal refinement on the one hand, as on the other beyond that of scriptural verity. Raymond upheld his influence, even over the mercenary Routiers, at the least possible expence to his popularity in other quarters. He dreamed not that the very order on which he most disdainfully pressed his heel, was that which should ere long arise and crush him. Alas for him who ventures to tread among scorpions, without having his feet first shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace !

The dominion of Count Raymond extended over the greater part of the territory already specified, the respective lords owing to him a fealty that his prowess compelled them to acknowledge, and, on most occasions, heartily uniting with him in the repulsion of any superior claimant. Like him, they despised the lazy, useless, and ignorant order of ecclesiastics ; like him they tolerated, and many of them openly fostered the purer faith held by the scattered people of God. But Toulouse, the immediate province so called, was where these protesters especially basked in the sunshine of patronage ! and the city itself was considered not less their head-quarters than it was the seat of Raymond's government. Fulcrand, Bishop of the place, made an effort to uphold the sinking credit of his order, but in vain : the very year before Innocent III. assumed the tiarâ,

an indignant historian describes the low ebb to which ecclesiastical power had fallen, in these terms : ' The temples were deserted ; the altar itself wanted ministers ; and the Church, not finding subjects sufficient to consecrate, was compelled to have recourse to orders of men destitute of the proper qualifications, who, by their ignorance and corruption aided the heretics to accomplish the destruction of that authority with which the Catholic religion had been for twelve centuries invested.' So rapidly was the man of sin, in those regions, consumed with the breath of the Lord's mouth, that there scarcely remained a tangible substance of the body which is finally to be destroyed by the brightness of His coming. But the set time had not yet arrived ; and this, like many other of his deadly wounds, was to be healed again.

Among the many classes who thronged Count Raymond's presence-chamber, on a day of public audience, there was not one in which a strong taint of what Rome calls heresy might not be detected. The feudal lords, his equal guests, who surrounded his chair of state, or leaned upon his arm as he slowly paced the marble floor, were frequently known, not only as the protectors, but as the open patrons of avowed Albigenses, from among whom they selected their counsellors and bosom friends. Some of them had nobly braved the fearful menace of excommunication, often paraded but as yet not actually fulminated against them as enemies to the faith : others, while making a show of compliance, and ostensibly preparing to seize the persons and effects of the accused, had secretly warned them of their dan-

ger, pointed out a more secure place of abode, and supplied the means of immediate removal. The military commanders, through all gradations of rank, partook in this feeling ; for, where their own minds were wholly unimpressed with the majestic reality of truth, as embodied in the creed of their Albigensic troops, their eyes could not be utterly closed to the beauty of holiness, as displayed in those men's daily walk. The living and moving principle within might be veiled from their careless, carnal sight ; but the fruits of the Spirit were as manifest in them as were the works of the flesh in others : and good order, fidelity, sobriety, punctuality, with calm, unflinching courage, were too well appreciated by those who held command over them, to fail of exciting a warm and generous sympathy, even if it won them not to investigate the origin of such consistent effects. In this class, which in those warlike days frequently comprised all the males of a province, between boyhood and old age, there were also multitudes who availed themselves of the sanction of their truly Christian comrades' example for neglecting the outward services of the nominal Church ; and in so doing set themselves free from all restraint, remaining utterly destitute of any religion, having rejected the false without enquiring after the true faith ; and thus, while incurring the brand of heresy, they attached by their loose living, the stigma of gross licentiousness to that in which they had neither part nor lot.

The substantial burgess, the humbler tradesman, the artizan and the peasant, must all have pleaded guilty to the charge of harbouring within the circle of his daily

companionship, if not in his own home, or in his own bosom, a portion of the pervading leaven. Among the three last it was, perhaps, chiefly to be sought for in its purity and lustre. Examples there were, in every rank, of an elevated Christian walk and conversation, compared with the prevalent character of the times, and the degraded state of nominal religion ; and the noble army of martyrs had its ranks thickly replenished from the luxurious palace, from the hall of study, from the comfortable homestead of the thriving gentleman, and other places where the noble, the wise, and the mighty were called, and justified, and glorified ; but the poor in this world were those among whom the riches of faith chiefly abounded ; and from whom God chiefly chose the heirs of the kingdom of heaven. These often approached Count Raymond with their respectful statements of grievances, for the redress of which they knew that he was appointed, and with petitions, that he was equally able and willing to grant. Nor could the railing accusations that some indignant ecclesiastic might pour forth against the suppliant, as a notorious despiser of his gods and goddesses, turn the current of justice in its even course. The contrary was indeed often evident ; a bias was given in favour of the denounced heretic by the very denunciation that sought to crush him ; and again, we must repeat, that, to the eye of man, the proud turrets of Toulouse's regal castle would appear to have belonged to a true watch-tower, most effectively manned for the defence of the Lord's vineyard.

But he whose coming is after the power of Satan, had never yet put forth that terrible power against the weak

defences thus established. Man might grapple with the strength of man, and deride his threats, and maintain a disputed possession in triumphant security ; but when the wrestling heretofore sustained against flesh and blood alone, becomes a grapple with the unseen host of principalities and powers : when the rulers of the darkness of this world overshadow the field with their ominous presence, and wicked spirits in high places assume the conduct of the fray, nothing but the armour, the whole armour of God, can enable an opponent to stand : only the girdle of truth, the breast-plate of righteousness, the sandals of peace, the shield of faith, the helmet of salvation, the sword of the word, all kept bright and serviceable by unceasing prayer, can furnish a warrior for that day's battle.

Where now is Count Raymond, where his feudal peers, and veteran knights of crusading renown ? They have vanished from the scene like smoke : the arm of flesh has withered, and is gone. Their presence may be as palpable, and their array as glittering, and their front as bold as it was erewhile, beneath the vaulted roof of that castellated palace, which has lost none of its solidity, nothing of its impregnable aspect : but as a watch-tower for the defence of the Lord's vineyard, it is nothing ; and they, as guardians, are less than nothing. The will remains, but the power that alone could now sustain that will in effectual operation is wanting, because it has never been sought. History, in all its ample pages, does not contain a more instructive lesson of the helplessness of man, than is furnished by the memorial of Raymond VI., the powerful Count of Toulouse.

It is customary to represent this chieftain as a man of doubtful courage, of weak mind, and wavering resolution : but no warrant exists for so regarding him. Raymond was an intrepid warrior, an undaunted upholder of his rights and possessions, his partly by inheritance, partly by conquest, and the rest in virtue of four marriages. His union with the sister of our own royal fanatic, the lion-hearted Richard, transferred to him some of England's possessions in France ; and his last alliance was a most politic one : just at the period when Innocent made vehement appeals to the French king, on behalf of the nominal Church, and when Raymond was necessarily present to the minds of both these potentates, as the principal offender, whom they must unite to destroy, the count married the sister of the king of Arragon, and so strengthened himself by this alliance, as to render his position one of ten-fold security. No, Raymond was neither fearful nor foolish, in the things of this world ; but he lacked the wisdom that cometh from above, and which alone could have armed him to withstand an onset headed by the king of the bottomless pit.

When Regnier and Guy entered upon their mission, their first destination was Narbonne ; where they prosecuted enquiries, made observations, and framed reports for their master's eye, which fired him to the utmost pitch of zeal for the instant suppression of what he now saw to be an antagonist power of formidable growth. Previously to despatching them, he had sent other delegates into the infected provinces, with full authority to destroy whatsoever and whosoever might

be found in the attitude of opposition to Rome ; and these had committed several cruel murders, publicly burning first a gentleman of consideration, whom they convicted of holding heretical opinions ; and subsequently a number of poor people in the villages where no powerful arm could be uplifted in their defence, and where terror and consternation paralyzed the simple inhabitants. Beyond this, however, no impression was made ; and the result of a close scrutiny on the part of his two inquisitors, only tended to prove how firmly the faith which they sought to destroy, had rooted itself. The pope, therefore, proceeded to select three other legates ; Arnaud, abbot of Citeaux, an ambitious crafty, eloquent, and unscrupulous man ; Peter de Castelnau, a stern bigot, fierce and unmasked, who openly panted to carry fire and sword alike into palace and hovel, and who could not even restrain the turbulence of his bitter spirit when policy demanded it ; and Raoul, a smooth, soft-spoken person, with much of the modern Jesuit about him : but neither the authoritative temper of the first, nor the oily subtlety of the last, could obtain ascendancy. The impetuous violence of Castelnau bore all before him ; and his premature exhibitions of ferocity, retarded the success of their mission, until they ended in his own destruction : an event that proved more serviceable than his prolonged life could have done.

While dispatching these legates, Innocent was not unmindful of another weapon, placed, as he conceived, at his sole command. Philip Augustus, king of France, was the sovereign to whom appertained the supreme

lordship of Toulouse ; and to him the pope addressed a letter that must not be omitted, exhibiting as it does, at a glance, the character of its writer, and uttering so impressively the dragon's roar, from under the horns of the lamb. It shows for what purpose, in the papal estimation, kings are appointed : and displays the fearful hypocrisy which is yet no real disguise ; the embroidered veil of gossamer-tissue, so lightly thrown back by the mother of harlots, exposing in all their naked hideousness, the features of her branded face. Thus runs the letter ; and a splendid composition it is, in its original Latin :—

‘ Sire,—

‘ The Lord has established the dignity of Pontiff, and that of king, for the preservation of his Church. The first to nourish her children, the second to defend them. That, to instruct docile souls, this to subdue rebellious spirits. The pontiff must pray for her most cruel enemies, and the king must draw the sword to punish them. If these two powers are agreed, in duly rendering their mutual service, then the secular arm must chastise those whom the Church is unable to bring back to their duty. A great monarch bears not the sword in vain ; God has committed it to him for the service of the faith. At the summons of the pontiff, he must hasten wheresoever the faith is menaced.

* * * *

In virtue of the power with which you are endued from on high, compel therefore, the counts and barons to confiscate the goods of the heretics ; and exercise a goodly severity against such

of these lords as refuse to expel them from their own dominions.'

This stirring appeal to the French king, produced no substantial effect : Philip Augustus was busied in settling and strengthening his newly-recovered possessions, the fruit of some successful wars ; and he did not consider it expedient suddenly to embroil himself with the powerful nobles of Provence, to indulge the ardour of a fiery young pope. He accordingly, transmitted empty promises to Rome, and threats no less empty to Toulouse, both of which were estimated at their real value. Innocent was not beguiled ; neither were the troublers of his peace alarmed.

Meanwhile, the three legates employed themselves diligently, in estimating first the state of the ecclesiastical body, whose degradation was so universally conspicuous. Castelnau transmitted to Rome heavy charges of incapacity, pusillanimity, and other offences against the three bishops of Narbonne, Beziers, and Toulouse ; all of whom they contrived to displace ; and by a characteristic stroke of policy they chose for the vacant chair of Toulouse, a man whose handsome person, joyous manners, liberal mind, and brilliant wit, were especially calculated to attract the refined Provençals. The bait took : Foulkes soon gathered around him an admiring congregation ; the deserted cathedral was once more thronged with delighted listeners ; and by his fascinating eloquence, playful sallies of wit, and all the charms of popular oratory, he seemed to have attached them permanently to his ministry. He then changed his tone, and gradually endeavoured to

lead them back into the mazes of that sombre superstition from which they had emerged,—some into the pure sunshine of the Gospel, others into the dazzling glitter of human learning and human science ; but all out of palpable darkness into comparative light. The effect was astounding ; the congregation at once forsook their pastor, and bishop Foulkes was left to descant on the power of the holy see, with all its appurtenances, and to recite his legends of saints, long since consigned to oblivion by those heretical Toulousians, with few auditors beyond the baffled triumvirate of legates, who thus received a more conclusive proof of the overthrow of papal error than they were prepared to encounter. It so disheartened Castelnau and Raoul, that they abruptly left the place, and were making all speed to Rome, when they met a Spanish bishop on his return to his diocese, who, after encouraging them in language worthy a better cause, proved his sincerity by dismissing his retinue, and on foot, with one only attendant, joining himself to them as a mendicant preacher, in which character he assured them that they, like the apostles of old, must pursue their mission if they desired to succeed. We notice the incident chiefly because the bishop of Osma's attendant, who, on this occasion, formed a fourth in the party, was no other than that scourge of the human race, Dominic, the founder of the murderous Inquisition.

By such machinery, so arranged, so directed, so promptly set in motion again after a temporary check, was Satan prosecuting his designs against the Lord's people. To make war with the saints, when the time

was come for crushing the infant church, the prince of darkness had found a general every way suited, in Lotharius de Signi ; and seeing that he had now grasped the appointed vicegerency of the Dragon, all the powers of hell seem to have been placed at his command for the execution of his dreadful behests. We are too apt to dwell exclusively upon the catastrophe, overlooking the progress of events, the long, wary, wily, skilful drawing of the net around the prey. It is unwise so to do ; for how know we that such enemies even now prowl about *our* path, and that in such a net it is confidently anticipated that *our* feet also shall be caught ? Nay, how can we look around us and mark the signs of the times, and doubt that even so it is ?

When our Lord Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness, to be tempted of the devil, a mighty panorama was opened to his view, by the magic power of the wicked one, exhibiting at once all the grandeur and the glory and the might of the world's kingdoms :—their hoarded wealth, their voluptuous beauty, the crushing force of their impetuous chivalry. There were the fascinations of Greece ; her poesy, her philosophy, her sculpture, and her innumerable blandishments ; there the chariots and horses, and iron legions of Rome, holding the known world in a fetter that none might break. To all these could Satan point, and boldly assert, “ All this is mine, and to whomsoever I will, I give it.” The assertion was not denied ; on the contrary, it was confirmed on numerous subsequent occasions, when the kingship, the godship of the devil

over the whole world that lieth in wickedness, was emphatically recognized. He who wielded this tremendous power; he who occupied the seat of permitted rule; he who had authority to dispose at will of what he vaunted to possess, is denominated in the record of that awful scene "the devil;" and is addressed by our Lord as "Satan."

Again, in the Apocalypse we are told of a dragon, whose enmity against the church is deadly, and his incessant aim, her destruction: of this dragon it is expressly said, he is "the Devil and Satan." Rev. xx. 2.

And again, when a beast is described whose peculiar work it is to make war with the saints, and to overcome them,—a beast every way identical with papal Rome, it is said, "The Dragon (i. e. the Devil and Satan) gave him his power, and his seat, and great authority." Rev. xiii. 2.

It is really wonderful that, with these solemn truths of Holy Scripture before their eyes, historians of the past, or politicians of the present days, can deal with this subject as with any ordinary matter, where natural causes produce natural effects. The contest between Christianity and Popery is but the predicted continuance of that which in the wilderness of Judea was held between Christ and Satan. As on the former occasion, so in the latter, we see the craft, the subtlety, and the plausibility of the old serpent brought into action; until, baffled in these, he withdraws the veil, exhibits his tremendous power, and boldly names the price at which he will barter it;—that is, the recognition of his sovereignty by an act that at once rejects the dominion

of the Lord God, and pledges the wretched victim for ever to the active service of his infernal master. We do not here pause to enter upon the deeply interesting subject of advantages gained by such compact on the part of the great adversary. He knows his doom ; and during the limited time that intervenes, he has a twofold object to accomplish : first, to involve in his own crime and punishment as many of God's creatures as he can seduce ; and secondly, to revenge the deadly wound inflicted on his head by the woman's Seed, by bruising to the uttermost, where he cannot destroy, the lowly members of the body of which the head is Christ. Personally he encountered the Holy One ; was conquered, and fled : by his human agents he persecutes the saints, and maintains against them, oftentimes, an actual *war*, which he, a disembodied spirit, could not wage without the intervention of human instruments, in one sense more powerful than himself ; for Satan can only menace or allure ; satanic men can torture and destroy the bodies of their fellow men. The immateriality of the evil spirit would be a bar to the acting out of his diabolical desires, had he not succeeded in securing the use of material bodies, capable of outraging in detail the letter of every divine law against which he can himself only maintain a spiritual rebellion. There is an awful magnitude, and a yet more awful reality about these subjects that we too little heed : almost any branch of ordinary human science draws forth the powers of the mind to investigate, to analyze, and to deduce conclusions, more readily, and to a wider extent than these deep things of God.

Enthroned in the dragon's seat, and well content to exercise the power and authority thereto belonging to the full satisfaction of his invisible prompter, Innocent kept an anxious eye on the scene of coming war. The failure at Toulouse was calculated to exasperate him ; and the angry spirit of Peter de Castelnau failed not to keep alive the flame of papal indignation. This impatient zealot could not long brook the restraint that Diego's far-seeing policy laid upon his violence ; or the wily deliberation of Dominic's crafty plans ; and he soon broke away from them to essay the powers of his fierce vituperation on Count Raymond, to whom he repaired ; insulting, menacing, and exasperating the haughty noble, because he refused, at the dictation of the legate, to enter into a doubtful compact with the surrounded barons on the basis of a general extermination of the subjects whom he was resolved to protect ; and finding that his words excited in Raymond only scorn and indignation, he proceeded to excommunicate the count ; laying his territories under an interdict. This, as the act of a passionate priest, would be lightly regarded ; he therefore appealed to the pope to confirm the sentence, who forthwith wrote in his sternest, most withering style to Raymond, and elicited from him a promise that he would proceed to the work of separation and extermination, pointed out as the sole price of such mercy as the Romish church assumes to dispense in spiritual matters ; between which and the deadliest vengeance that she has temporal power to inflict, she knows no medium. Raymond, however, made no progress in his reluctant task ; a year passed on, and

heresy flourished as before, notwithstanding some warlike demonstrations against it, in semblance at least on his part. Castelnau, who watched him with the eye of a vulture following the caterer of his destined repast of blood, could not brook his tardy movements ; he sought Raymond out, at St. Gilles, where he was engaged on some expedition, and bitterly reproached him, as a hypocrite, a heretic, a traitor, and whatsoever else might most deeply sting the pride of the regal chieftain ; reiterating, at the close of his harangue, his former excommunication and interdict. On this occasion, Count Raymond was so incensed as to utter words of menace against the personal safety of the legate ; which he presently recalled. They were, however, spoken ; and they sealed his own doom. Castelnau and his companion quitted the scene of this altercation in great wrath, leaving the count and his military companions no less excited. Having shortly afterwards to pass the Rhone, not far from Saint Gilles, they took up their quarters at a village inn, and here they fell in with a gentleman of Raymond's court, a witness of the legate's outrageous conduct, and sharing in the general resentment excited by it. As the travellers issued from the church where they had all attended morning mass, on the day after their first encounter, the Toulousian engaged Castelnau in a disputation on the subject of heresy and its due punishment. The fiery zealot on one hand, and on the other a young soldier who had so recently witnessed the insult put upon his princely commander, and heard the interdict pronounced which involved in its deadly evil his own homestead, his own kin, and his

familiar friends, were not likely to debate the point with temperance. The quarrel ran high between them, and ere they parted, Peter de Castelnau had fallen, a blood-stained corpse, beneath the poignard of his opponent.

This occurred in January 1208, ten years after the first mission of Guy and Regnier from the Vatican. During that period, all possible means had been used to prepare the way for what Innocent was resolved to accomplish. Dissensions had been sown with lavish hand, throughout the once peaceable and united community : preaching had been resorted to, of a very popular style, vehement, calculated to attract the notice, and to rouse the passions of the imaginative auditors. All Rome's pretensions were anew set forth, sometimes under the guise of deepest sanctity, by men whose wasted forms and poverty-stricken aspect, bespoke their voluntary surrender of all fleshly gratifications ; sometimes with the pomp and pride, and overpowering arrogance that often dazzle or dismay where they cannot convince the reason. Especially was the craft pursued of purchasing traitors and hiring calumniators, who secretly poisoned the minds of their neighbours against the harmless Christians, who were, moreover, constantly drawn into public disputation, on which their opponents were sure to perplex their simple minds, by sophistry that puzzled and silenced them, though it left their faith untouched ; and then, all who did not openly avow themselves to be what the Church of Rome denounced as heretics, condemned and accursed, were ostentatiously included in the victorious party ; thus insensibly

rooting in their hearts a feeling of hostility against their neighbours, and a contempt for the religion which they had learned to reverence, from considering—not the arguments that it could advance—but the fruit that it perpetually bore before their eyes.

But the time was now come for such an outburst of despotic violence as better suited the temper of Innocent III, than this dilatory sapping and mining. He had, before the close of the preceding year, fulminated a string of pontifical bulls, addressed to the king and the principal nobles of France, for the effect of which he anxiously watched ; their purport being to lay the foundation of a war of fanaticism against those whom he represented as being worse than the Saracens ; when tidings of Castelnau's assassination,—closely connected, of course, with the angry threats of Raymond, and perpetrated by one who had stood beside the count when he uttered those threats,—reached the pontiff in Rome. Every bad, every vengeful, every merciless project, received at once a mighty impetus, and a very plausible excuse. The brain of Innocent knew no repose, his rapid pen never stayed its flight over the pages that were taught to communicate his own irritated feelings, and the pile so warily heaped up was kindled at once into a blaze ; not of sudden, unpremeditated character, but according to the deep-laid schemes of many years, now brought to maturity by an event the most opportune that could possibly have occurred, for the party on whom it seemed to fall as a heavy calamity.

The crusades had long been found a powerful engine in the hands of Rome. They extended her tem-

poral power ; filled her coffers ; fixed, beyond any other means, the fetter of her spiritual despotism ; and, what was of primary importance, supplied a safety-valve by which the military prowess and resources of monarchs who might have proved troublesome vassals to the papacy, were directed into a distant region, to serve its ends ; while these kings with their armies had their worst passions perpetually kept alive, their ferocity untamed, their thirst for blood and spoil encouraged, and all in subordination to the fanaticism which it behoved their master to nourish, as their prevailing characteristic. The nobles of Provence had of late been backward in leading their forces to these " holy wars : " the refinement of taste, manners, and feelings, and still more, no doubt, the working of so much good leaven in the mass, had indisposed them for the savage scenes that desolated the fair land of Palestine ; while their own beautiful country constantly improved under the reign of comparative peace, and industry, and the happy influence that a race of resident lords will shed over a territory inhabited by grateful and attached dependents. What a prey was here for the spoiler's eye to rest upon ! How many powerful incentives moved his relentless spirit to decide its doom !

Here was, first, a wealthy land, abounding in the choicest fruits of the earth, and in the acquired treasures that affluent ease had loved to accumulate. Stately mansions, the castle that frowned defiance on hostile arms ; the church of magnificent architecture and of costly endowment ; the palace where luxury spread her most gorgeous couch ; the warehouse heaped with

valuable merchandize ; the manufactory with its abundant productions in every branch of industry within the reach of an ingenious people. The sons of the soil well fitted to enrich by their labour any conqueror who might enslave them, and its lovely daughters, a yet more tempting prey in the eyes of those licentious savages whom Rome delighted to train for her ' holy wars,' by heaping fuel on every earth-born, every hell-born flame that burnt within them.

Such was the prize : the incentives were many and strong. That any nation should dare to exist in a state approaching independence was not to be permitted ; but when that growing independence might be traced to the avowed prevalence of Gospel light among the people ; when the yoke of superstition sat loosely on their necks, and the thunders of the Church rolled unheeded over their heads, it was indeed time for the sovereign pontiff to look to it. In this very year, the daring contumacy of John provoked the visitation of an interdict under which England groaned for six years ; and the slight regard paid by the king and nobles of France to Innocent's vehement appeals against heresy, urged him yet more to immediate action. He had besides, witnessed a falling-off in the ardour of the Eastern crusaders, which could not be rekindled by any of the arts that had first inspired it. The Saracens had possession of Jerusalem, and were in little danger of being driven thence by the nominal Christians. These last had found the length of the way, its numberless perils, the formidable power of the enemy who resisted them, and, above all, perhaps, the exhaustion of such spoil as the

country had once offered to the grasp, more than a sufficient counterpoise to the reversionary guarantee of a place in paradise, which they knew could be purchased at Rome on other and easier terms. Little remained of the original spirit of the crusades, beyond the sanguinary, licentious, plundering dispositions implanted and increased in the bosoms of the adventurers : and to give all these free course in a war with the saints of God, was a thought worthy of the vicegerent of Satan.

Shall we pace again the marble halls of his palace, and enter the apartment of the Man of Sin, where, with ten added years upon his frowning brow, years of ripened power, and pride, and malignity, and hatred against Christ, he sits engaged in the prosecution of what, in the wilderness of Judea, his master began ! He is causing in his vivid description, the honour, and the glory, and the beauty of those peaceful provinces to pass before the eyes of some who will again and again renew their idolatrous worship of him in order to grasp them. He is putting heaven itself up to sale, as the more seemly prize for him, the pretended head of the church, to offer for services that are to repay themselves on the spot by an unlimited appropriation of whatsoever they can wrest from the victim's grasp. He sets forth, in that atrocious document, that the crime of holding a pure faith, based on the Holy Scriptures, is far greater in the sight of the Most High than those of the most depraved Pagans ; and that the sin of withholding divine honours from them which be no gods, equally exceeds the pollution of holy places, heretofore held out as crying for

vengeance, at the peril of their souls who should fail to punish it. Accordingly, though in point of distance, of danger, of difficulty, such a crusade is not worthy to be named in comparison with the former expeditions ; he proffers as high terms to all who shall take the cross against Raymond of Toulouse, for the purpose at once of deposing him, and of exterminating the people of the Lord sheltered under his protection, as ever were granted to their fathers, when setting forth to expel the Saracens from Palestine. To all who engage in the enterprise, he grants full remission of every sin against God and man committed in the course of their lives : to all who shall fall in the conflict he guarantees an immediate welcome into the presence and to the throne of God ; while for such as conquer, he has, in addition to these insubstantial prospects, a catalogue of what they may seize and enjoy, sufficient to inflame the coldest heart of sluggish man while he glances over it. To those who, having a military force at their disposal, be they crowned kings or lords of some petty barony, shall hold back from the work, he speaks only menaces that embrace both time and eternity. They, also, shall be given over to the same deadly revenge, as abettors of God's enemies, and traitors to the Church ; and hereafter their portion shall be in the lake of unquenchable fire. True type of the ruler of modern Babylon was the yet untamed despot who set up his gigantic idol of gold on the plains of Dura : " Who is that god or man that shall deliver you out of my hand ? " But there the resemblance ends ; Nebuchadnezzar, humbled under the mighty hand of God, lived to glorify Him, and died in

peace : Lotharius de Signi feared not, repented not, and the measure that he meted out to others, the mercy that he showed to the harmless flock of Christ, must be the measure of God's terrible dealings with his ruined soul.

Such, it may be objected, is not the language of Christian charity : but it is the language of Christian truth, and who shall say that these two attributes of our most holy faith may be separated ? Charity is a Christian grace, and, as such, it cannot stand in opposition to the holy root whence it proceeds : it cannot call evil good, or darkness light, or put sweet for bitter. We, at least, will not incur the responsibility of so doing. We find the "son of perdition" at his appointed work, and we recognize him, and shudder. It may be well here, to note in brief outline the plan on which Innocent III. was bringing to bear all the powers alike of his natural character, and of his acquired position.

In the first place, he prepares a bull, breathing all the vengeful hostility of his spirit against the Count of Toulouse, as the presumed instigator of Castelnau's assassination ; characterizing him as the principal minister of the devil, and commanding a public anathema to be pronounced against him in every church throughout Southern Gaul, to the princes and barons of which the manifesto was addressed ; adding these words, " And as, following the canonical sanctions of the holy fathers, we must not observe faith towards those who keep not faith towards God, or who are separated from the communion of the faithful, we discharge by apostolical authority, all those who believe themselves bound towards this count, by any oath either of alli-

ance or of fidelity ; we permit every catholic man, saving the right of his principal lord, to pursue his person, to occupy and retain his territories, especially for the purpose of exterminating heresy." Moreover, he laid under an interdict any and every place that should afford a shelter to the murderers of Peter de Castelnau.

His next step was to stir up the fiery brotherhood of Citeaux, Bernardines, to take the lead in the movement against the Albigenses ; nominating their abbot, Arnold Amalric, as his legate, and sending them forth in a swarm to overrun the neighbouring provinces ; with a mission similar to that of Peter the hermit in former days. He authorized them to secure pardon and paradise to all who should take up the cross against the heretics ; and by this movement ensured the speedy assembling of such an army as was needed to execute his designs. The zeal with which these men of peace obeyed the sanguinary command, fully justified the confidence placed in them. He then established a new order, under the leadership of Dominic the Spanish monk, whose business it was to go in pairs through all the towns and villages of the condemned districts, preaching, admonishing, and contending against the faith once delivered to the saints. They were to preserve the aspect of great sanctity, zeal, and self-devotion ; in every way to win the respect and confidence of such as had not wholly cast off their allegiance to the church, and while strengthening them in the ancient errors, to draw from them all that they knew respecting the persons, occupations, places of resort, and other particulars connected with their Albigensic friends and

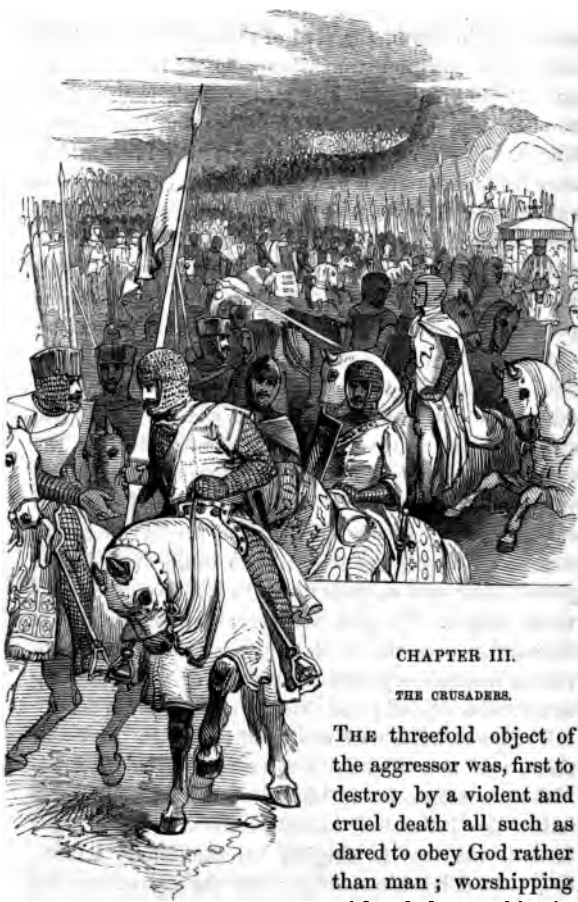
neighbours. Foulques, the bishop, whose early accomplishments as a troubadour had been enlisted into the ecclesiastical service, and for a time captivated the Toulousians, became an eminent leader in this preaching order ; subsequently merged in that horrible creation of Rome, the Inquisition.

What more has Innocent to do, after thus craftily disposing all the means at his command to draw the snare around his prey ? He looks with a satisfied eye upon the well-digested scheme, and seizes once more the pen to address those whose practised military skill must consummate his design. Once more he summons Philip Augustus to assume in person the direction of the war ; and with every promise of success, he also calls on the Duke of Burgundy ; the Count of Leicester, Simon de Montfort ; and other nobles of high note, who were sure to hear from the prelates of their various provinces, the continual iteration of the pope's requisition. Some time may elapse ere the vast machinery thus prepared can be brought to commence working ; but never since Rome's pagan myriads had revelled in the life-blood of the earlier followers of Jesus within their ancient colosseum, had so large a feast of martyr-blood been catered for as that which now grew and flowed before the mental vision of Lotharius de Signi, as he planned the mighty havoc of a new crusade within the secret chambers of the Vatican. Well may Rome emblazon and glory in her appropriate motto, *SEMPER EADEM*.

CHAPTER THIRD.



THE CRUSADERS.



J. COOPER. Sc.

CHAPTER III.

THE CRUSADERS.

THE threefold object of the aggressor was, first to destroy by a violent and cruel death all such as dared to obey God rather than man ; worshipping with a holy worship, in

spirit and in truth, the God of the spirits of all flesh, who seeks spiritual worshippers to do him honour ; and drawing nigh unto him by the living way, opened through the flesh of his only-begotten Son, Jesus Christ. These must be cut off ; for the faith which they held, recommended by practice no less pure, was ruinous to the kingdom of Antichrist. Secondly, those who, without embracing their doctrines had tolerated them, and who were living in neighbourly goodwill with the Lord's peaceful followers, must be, as far as possible, involved in their destruction ; both because of the undiscovered extent to which the taint might have secretly spread itself, and in order to quicken others, in different places, to the work of immediate extermination whensoever they should discover the entrance among them of that which was pregnant with such direful consequences to its fosterers. Thirdly, to subdue the dangerous spirit of independence recently manifested among the nobles, who could even dare to protect their own subjects from the tyranny of the universal despot. To pass the besom of indiscriminate destruction over the whole surface of the infected provinces, was the only certain method of accomplishing so extensive an end ; and this it was resolved to do.

The instruments were worthy of the work. No doubt there were among them some who believed that the Moloch to whom Rome offered up her hecatombs, was indeed the God of heaven, and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ : and that in obeying her sanguinary behests, they were doing him service ; but the greater number were debauched desperadoes, who, having no relish for

the gentler walks of life, no disposition towards industrious pursuits, nor talent to acquire the means of gratifying their avaricious propensities otherwise than by plunder, were ripe for this or for any other outrage. We must also look deeper into the constitution of the army ; it was composed of such as at Satan's own instigation came forward to enrol themselves under his banner ; renewing and prolonging the memorable combat in the wilderness. How awful is the thought that the evil spirit, yea, multitudes of the fallen angels who acknowledge him as their prince and leader, should have entered the abodes and the hearts of thousands of nominal Christians, gathering them together to a partial and preliminary battle against the Lord God Almighty—preliminary to the last grand struggle of the coming Armageddon, even as it was a sequel to the first encounter in the desert of Judæa ! It was “ that old dragon, which is the devil and Satan,” who now, by the instrumentality of the papal beast, made war upon the saints ; and all that was his,—the kingdoms of the world, their power and glory, either swelled the advancing host, or fell in prostrate submission before it.

It was a spectacle of pride for the arch-fiend to contemplate, when the vast body of assailants was assembled, and put in motion. They wore upon their breasts the *Nehushtan* of the Christian dispensation : the cross, by idolatrous perversion, rendered a needless offence to man, and an abomination before God. Not the cross in which Paul gloried ; not the cross that crucified him to the world, and the world to him ; not the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by which we understand his vicari-

ous death, undergoing a judicial curse on our behalf, that so he might redeem us from the curse of the law ; but the paltry representation of a Roman gibbet, on the original of which hundreds may have suffered death before and after HIM whose precious blood was shed for our redemption ; and the retention of which, as a thing to be venerated in the Christian Church, is one of the inexplicable marvels to which habit, not reason or religion reconciles us. This cross, the crusaders of the East were wont to wear upon the shoulder ; but as if to show how much nearer to their hearts was the work of shedding kindred blood, the invaders of Provence placed it on their breast. On appearing in this badge, equipped for the expedition, each hoary transgressor, each wild reckless boy, each savage freebooter and remorseless manslayer, was entitled to receive a full acquittance of his vast debt, past and to come, to the justice, the purity of the Most High God. He engaged to serve for forty days, destroying with fire and sword whosoever and whatsoever was pointed out to him as lying under the ban of Rome ; and he, in return, had forgiveness of all his sins, and a free entrance into the paradise of God, guaranteed to him in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. Truly, the most wonderful part of the mystery of iniquity is the inconceivable length of Satan's daring, when he ventured to offer to the rational creatures of God a lie so enormous, so repulsive, and so gross as this. We turn with horror from the scene over which the devil and his angels must have exulted with amazement at their own success, to take a survey of the devoted regions—the terrified popula-

tion on whom this torrent of cruelty was preparing to burst.

And first for Count Raymond. Had he been partaker even in a very small measure of the like precious faith with those whom he had hitherto protected, the gathering of these war-clouds, and mutterings of the rising storm, would but have driven him more close to the shelter of the everlasting Rock, against which the gates of hell rage in vain. He would have strengthened himself in his God ; and not feared what man could do unto him. Having virtually admitted that the Church of Rome was a false pretender to infallibility, and an usurper of universal dominion, by openly encouraging those who renounced her worship and denied her authority, he would have resolved to maintain his own independence, his right, yea, his solemn duty to defend the harmless and helpless flock of Christ, committed to his temporal keeping ; and he would have exerted his utmost influence among the nobles around him, many of whom were already predisposed to the same course ; assured that God would exert His prerogative, and fulfil His promise, making him, in life or in death, more than conqueror. But such, alas ! was not Raymond of Toulouse : he had received the mark of the beast on his forehead, and in his right hand : he professed the doctrines of Rome, and had often wrought out her unholy will, by the power of his sword, and in the exercise of his authority ; and now it was his choice, not to have this mark washed away in the blood of the Lamb, but to appeal to it as a defence against the vengeance of his enraged tyrant. His own territories, he well knew, and

his own person too, were marked for an especial visitation : the death of Castlenau, in which he does not appear to have been at all implicated, was laid at his door ; and on him was the first fierce outburst of long-restrained enmity sure to expend itself. The pope had appointed Arnold Amalric, Abbot of Citeaux, legate in that part of the country ; a man who combined in his character every leading feature of the papacy itself. Fierce, implacable, unmerciful ; inflated with pride, and envenomed by the bitterest hatred against Christ's people ; without a touch of natural feeling, even towards those of his own communion, as the event proved, this haughty priest seems to have been an incarnation of some fallen spirit, intent only on trampling down as much as came within his reach of the glorious handiworks of God. Raymond knew with whom he had to deal ; and he quailed as a poor, unassisted mortal might be expected to do, when brought into direct collision with principalities and powers, the rulers of the darkness of this world, and wicked spirits in high places. He summoned his nephew, Raymond Roger, to his side, and prepared to present himself with him before the arrogant legate at Aubenaz.

Raymond Roger differed in many points from his uncle ; having been placed under more favourable circumstances. He was only ten years of age when the fair patrimony of Alby, Bezieres, Carcassonne, and Limouse, devolved on him at his father's death ; and those who governed for him during a long minority, not only favoured the persons, but appear to have sincerely appreciated the doctrines of the Albigenses. The young

count was now four and twenty ; with all the generous ardour of that age fairly enlisted on behalf of those whom Rome had now doomed to utter destruction ; and surely he was not himself very far from the kingdom of God. The great day will reveal whether he attained to it, through the "much tribulation" that he was destined to endure for the cause, which grace was not given him to identify himself with, in spiritual as he did in temporal matters. He certainly stands out in very bright and beautiful contrast to his unhappy uncle.

At Aubenaz, enthroned in all the gaudy pomp of sacerdotal vicegerency, sat the inflated Arnold ; and around him were assembled those whose pitiable distinction it was, to be nominated chiefs in this unholy war. The two counts sought an audience, and were received with studied scorn and contumely by the legate, who scarcely deigned to give ear to their protestations of unshaken allegiance to the papacy. The charge of holding any opinions by Rome branded as heretical, they both repelled ; demanding a fair trial to clear them from this aspersion, and also of the false accusation of having been accessory to the death of Castelnau. But the only reply that they could elicit from Arnold was, a refusal to interfere, with a haughty intimation, that if they sought any mitigation of impending punishment, they must carry their submission to Rome.

The terms of their submission were well understood by the kinsmen, who retired to canvas the subject, on which they so differed as to part in mutual warmth. The Count of Beziers saw with indignation that his uncle was prepared to purchase such peace and safety

as might be gained by the unqualified surrender of his poor inoffensive Christian dependents into the hand of their sanguinary foes : that he was willing to become himself the executioner of every murderous decree against them, and by force of arms to compel the nobles around, including Raymond Roger himself, into a like course of purveying human victims for the shambles of Innocent III. He protested that, rather than see the crusading army enter the province of Toulouse, he would turn his hand against his next of kin ; and by the most zealous execution of all their behests, conciliate the dreaded ecclesiastics, in whose hands the fate of princes was placed. He resolved to appeal for assistance in carrying out this plan, to Philip Augustus of France, who was his cousin ; and to Otho of Germany ; while his lowliest, most unreserved submission should be laid, by fitting ambassadors, at the footstool of the papal throne. To the young, generous, and partially enlightened Raymond Roger, this sounded as the language of dastardly fear, and cruel treachery : and the more so as it directly menaced, not only the subjects of the Count of Toulouse, but his own, and the whole body of the so-called heretics throughout the region. He, therefore, avowed his determination of putting his territories into a state of defence, and of faithfully preserving what was committed to his charge ; and they took their several ways, with feelings and purposes as dissimilar as those of any two men could be who still outwardly wore the same badge of allegiance to the See of Rome.

It is difficult to decide what was the real temper of

mind of the young count, on the important subject of religion. Probably he had no fixed views, no serious impressions as yet, concerning it. Born and reared in the very lap of Provençal refinement, nurtured in poetry and romance, and full of the spirit of chivalry, apart from all the stern fanaticism that had rendered it too generally a sanguinary scourge of the helpless, a hideous engine in the hands of ecclesiastical tyranny, the youthful noble had looked forward to the time when he should in his own person become the mild and impartial ruler of a loving people; the fearless defender of his own rights and their's; the patron of literature and art; the promoter of a generous liberality, which he had learned to admire in the guardians of his long minority. All this he might be without giving religion any prominent place in his regards: he might deem it right, consistent, and expedient, to worship externally where his long line of ancestors had worshipped; at the same time readily according to other men their own free choice in the same matter. He was lord of the temporalities of a wide domain; and he found another power claiming supremacy in spiritual things, including a very substantial proportion of worldly wealth, by long custom and by general consent, secured to them as the remuneration of their sacerdotal labours. With this order of things he did not feel himself disposed to interfere; and we must regard his professions of unshaken fidelity to the papacy, as a simple avowal of such acquiescence in the laws of his country. Here he drew the line: he would be the servant of Rome just so far; but to do her savage bidding in the slaughter or

even the abandonment of his innocent people ; to stain his knightly honour with perfidy so deep, and to purchase the continued enjoyment of his princely birth-right, at the price of permitting a horde of ruffians to riot in the bloodshed of his subjects, and the plunder of his land,—far from the bosom of Raymond Roger, was a thought so base as this ! His honest profession of spiritual allegiance had been spurned : his demand for a fair investigation into the matter of a murder with which he was not even remotely connected, was denied ; and he was insultingly told to repair to the chief ecclesiastic at Rome, in the character of a criminal suing for a commutation of his sentence. We may very well enter into the feelings with which the young chieftain quitted the presence of the legate, and subsequently parted in anger from his cowed and dishonoured kinsman, without enrolling him among the persecuted saints on whom the war was about to burst. We can conceive him in the honest pride of an authority never by him abused, summoning around him his knights, and burgesses, and the bold youths who had grown up with him in the peaceful luxury of his court ; representing to them the contumacious wrong that he had suffered at the hands of the pope's representative ; and kindling their indignation by the recital of its effect on Raymond of Toulouse ; whose defection from the cause of justice and independence, only roused to a higher pitch their determination, unflinchingly to uphold it. The result was, an immediate application of all hands, to the work of fortifying the various towns and castles within his dominions ; and a bold resolve to be before-

hand with the Count of Toulouse in warlike demonstrations of their intended line of conduct.

Military ardour, attachment to their young lord, love of justice, impatience of oppression, and the scorn that the ecclesiastics had generally brought on their order, combined with a feeling of generous sympathy and respect for their Albigensic compatriots, no doubt formed the chief ingredients in the devotedness of Raymond Roger's followers to the cause that he had so manfully espoused : but mingled with these there were the real objects of this Satanic war, the children of God, who served him in the gospel of his Son. These wrought with their neighbours on the ramparts, and the walls ; and aided in every defensive work ; but they did it in the spirit of the Jews who laboured under Nehemiah upon the rising bulwarks of Jerusalem. Though they used every means to strengthen those earthly defences, the hope of their hearts spoke but one language, "The God of heaven, he will prosper us." Though they furbished the shield, and sharpened the spear, and made fast the rivets of knightly mail, yet they trusted in none of these, nor in the fidelity of the noble Count himself to their cause : they sheltered themselves behind the shield of faith ; the weapon which alone they knew to be mighty was the word of God, precious fragments of which they possessed, each in itself a sharp sword, sufficient to hold the enemy of their souls at bay. The whole armour of God secured them from shafts that aimed to wound their immortal spirits ; what they might suffer at the hands of those who had power to kill the body was to them no matter

of deep concern ; they feared only Him who can destroy both body and soul in hell ; and knowing the great love of God that had not spared his own Son, but delivered him up as a ransom for them, they also were filled with the perfect love that casteth out all tormenting fear. They had two main objects of prayerful interest : their own perseverance unto death in the profession of a true faith, and the fate of their still unconverted but generous and devoted countrymen, rallying around them in the hour of their darkest trial. No one can say what multitudes were brought to God in the course of that fearful struggle, what a harvest of souls was reaped for heaven in those fields of blood ; how many, long halting between two opinions, or unawakened to any feeling at all on the subject, were won to Christ by the conversation, by the faith, patience, endurance of his tried servants. No one can say, how, in the midst of his infernal exultation over the writhing bodies of the martyrs, the fiend was tortured by seeing heaven's golden portals thrown wide to receive a host of contrite spirits, called, justified, glorified, with the rapidity that marked the dying malefactor's conversion, on Calvary, rendering the scene of his apparent triumph one of aggravated loss, defeat, and shame.

These are among the secret things that belong to God alone ; but that they do occur we have many delightful intimations. " Except a man be born again, he cannot enter the kingdom of God." This we know, and we watch for evidences of that new birth into the heirship of heaven ; and we know them by their fruits, who have thus passed from death unto life. But the

moment at which a soul is so born, who shall determine ? It is some moment known to the Father of spirits : it is some point of time, when it can be said, " This thy brother was dead, and is alive again ; " some moment when the angels of God burst into a song of joy, because a sinner has repented, believes, and is put in possession of everlasting life. It is done before man can perceive any trace of it : Ananias, a just man, a believing, obedient servant of the Lord, favoured with revelation too, was utterly staggered when told to go and greet Saul of Tarsus with a message of love. He even expostulated ; but the answer was conclusive, " Go thy way ; for he is a chosen vessel unto me. " Oh the depth of the riches of redeeming love !

We should stand amazed indeed, could we trace all that is wrought by it in the world around us ; and more, we should become careless, presuming, neglectful of our own great work in using means for the accomplishment of what the Lord has willed to do. Yet it is a cordial, good in such seasons of trial to our faith, as this to the melancholy details of which we are reluctantly drawing nigh. It is good to remember that the Lord's little flock had been, as the testimony of their enemies abundantly shews, disseminating the truths of the gospel on every side, among friendly listeners, who were able to test the doctrine by the daily walk of those who proclaimed it ; and to whom it was now to be given to witness the power of God in them, triumphing over death and hell ; while that foul system against which they had steadily protested, was made to stand forth in the utmost hide-

ousness of its naked atrocity, a combination of all that was diabolical. Alike the dying prayers of the innocent victims, and the yells of their infuriated murderers, must have spoken a language that few hearts could resist, "Come out of her, my people !"

Yes, many did come out of her, who died with a rosary at their girdle, and a crucifix in their bosoms, before they had time to cast them off. Many, and we delight to believe that Raymond Roger was among them, learned in the darkness of a dungeon to rest in the bright beams of a Saviour's love. These, had they survived, would have formed a body of firm and fearless protesters against all the abominations of the system from which they were delivered ; but it was the will of God that in this instance the beast, making war upon the saints, should also overcome them in the sight of man ; for they were delivered into his hand, and hence the harvest was not allowed openly to ripen till the sickle of death was prepared to be put in. We can see, dimly and imperfectly, the outline of a very mighty work ; we can comprehend how the garner of heaven was replenished when the pleasant scene of an earthly growth was laid waste, and trampled down, and destroyed. God's work is too equal for our unsteady eyes to follow close on its unwavering line ; but the day is at hand when, in its magnificent beauty it shall be fully revealed, and our purified vision shall be strengthened to gaze upon it ; and our lips shall be opened to utter with understanding the predicted song of praise : " Marvellous are thy works, Lord God Almighty : just and true are thy ways, O King of saints !"

If, among those who followed the profession of a purer faith, were any who had forgotten the exhortation to "cease from man," and had made flesh their arm, by trusting in the favourable disposition of the Count of Toulouse to uphold their cause, they were convinced of their sin, and made to realize the fulness of their peril, on the 18th of June, 1209. On that morning a pageant wound its way through the public streets towards the church of St. Gilles', comprising an extraordinary number of ecclesiastics of every order and degree, habited in their goodliest raiment, and exhibiting in ostentatious display the pomp and the pride of that renovated power to which all else was rapidly succumbing. There were the Bernadines, the boasted directors of the terrible movement that was to annihilate all opposition to the papal see ; there were the few first followers of Dominic, fearful in the infamy of their sanguinary brotherhood ; and their dark leader silently pondering as he strode along, the mechanism of his project for a permanent tribunal of irresponsible, irresistible powers of destruction. There were the lazy monks, the denizens of many a fat abbacy, and mendicant friars, and parish priests, from the humble curate to the pompous prelate, each in his due place, distinguished by the habit of his order. One character pervaded the whole mass : it was that of an ovation. Their step was a march of triumph ; and every eye was lighted up with an exultation that no one strove to repress. Conspicuous above all rode the legate, Milon, the confidential secretary of Innocent III, who had nominated him to the temporary dignity in a show of compliance with

Count Raymond's remonstrances against being placed in the hands of Arnold, whom he regarded as his personal enemy. Milon was instructed to deal subtilly with this miserable dupe, allowing the Abbot of Citeaux to direct and to devise every thing, while he wore only the semblance of authority to deceive the Count. Gorgeously apparelled, and tended with the reverence due to the Pope's representative, the nominal legate presided over the cavalcade ; his stately mule led by knights of noble birth, while his own hands were uplifted to dispense among the kneeling crowd such blessings as Rome's delegate can bestow.

So far the triumphant ecclesiastics ; and next after them came the conquered captive. Bare-headed, and bare-footed, his shoulders also exposed, in readiness for the coming infliction, while a cord was knotted round his neck, in token of such criminality as would have incurred a public execution but for the merciful disposition of his judges, walked the mighty and warlike prince, Count Raymond of Toulouse, who had submitted to this disgraceful humiliation as part price of the papal absolution. Half a dozen tonsured officials of the church came close behind him, bearing the instruments of flagellation ; while the penitent, with arms devoutly crossed, and eyes cast down to the ground, where his ignominious halter trailed, wore the aspect of profound submission, and self-upbraiding sorrow for his past contumacious resistance of the holy church. It was a spectacle on which few could look unmoved, though for the greater part the emotions excited were such as men felt it needful to confine within their own

bosoms. Of avowed and consistent believers none were present ; but there were many hundreds who had virtually shaken off the fetters of the papacy, and who, looking on the power of the ecclesiastical order as a bygone thing, had accustomed themselves to treat with undisguised scorn and derision the very men who were now setting their foot on the neck of their chief. With bitter indignation, and stern disdain, and struggling impatience of the yoke which yet they knew not how to avert from their unwilling shoulders, they beheld their fallen prince ; and secretly wished that his fall had rather been into an honourable grave, that such an act of voluntary prostration under the heel of an usurpation that he had long seemed to set at nought. But spies were on every side ; accusers, who would make a man an offender not only for a word but for a look ; and heads depressed, and brows bent, it might appear in submission or in devotion, were all that met the scrutinizing gaze of the monks and their emissaries.

The church, of course, was filled with as many of Raymond's knightly followers as could be summoned to witness his shameful degradation. This would answer the double purpose of alienating them from a despicable chief, and of impressing them with awful convictions of the church's power. Slowly, and amid the chaunt of penitential psalms, the culprit took his way, in a long circuit through the aisles of the church, offering homage at every shrine, and exhibiting himself to each scattered portion of the breathless congregation. The legate was duly enthroned : his sacerdotal brethren

took their stations, so as best to display their numbers and the gaudiness of their changeable attire : and some preliminary mummeries having been performed, Raymond, Count of Toulouse, the lordly prince, the veteran commander, the man who had been set for the defence of a persecuted flock now cruelly abandoned, was led as near as possible to the altar, and scourged by the willing hands of the monks, till the vaulted roof re-echoed their strokes, and the blood that he dared not to shed in a lawful resistance against sin, flowed to appease the roused vengeance of Satan's vicegerent.

This being done, and a violent harangue from the pulpit having set forth in glowing colours the enormity of his crimes, and the marvellous tenderness of Rome in sparing his forfeit life ; with a full enumeration of the concessions that he had made, including the surrender of his seven principal castles to the Pope, and his unreserved submission to whatsoever sentence might be pronounced upon him ; an absolution, not less degrading than the flagellation, was declared by the legate ; and in final token of his perfect reconciliation to the papal see, Count Raymond was invested with the white cross, and commanded to unite his forces with those then about to attack his nephew ; he also, as best acquainted with the territories and the resources of the assailed noble, becoming their principal guide.

Disgusting and disgraceful as was the conduct of Count Raymond, there is not at this hour a prince or a warrior in Europe who would not act the same part, at the beck of Rome, if but the Lord permitted her to wield again the like authority, and removed the re-

straining grace that alone keeps them as yet from giving their power unto the Beast. Already, in England, we have our political Count Raymond, pursuing the same career of degrading concession to the demands of an alien usurpation, as rapidly as the awakened Protestantism of the nation will permit him to go on: and to "be beaten with many stripes" will assuredly, sooner or later, be his well-earned need. Stripes that will but seal his ultimate condemnation with the brand of unrepentant treachery.

The host whom the wretched Count was dispatched to join, consisted of three principal divisions, of which the first had been chiefly collected at Lyons, by Arnold the legate, and were subjects of the Emperor Otho IV. The second division, subjects of England, had been assembled by the archbishop of Bordeaux; and the third, who owed allegiance to France, had the bishop of Puy for their leader. Strange indeed does it sound, that men asserting themselves to be ministers and preachers of the everlasting gospel, pastors of the Church of God, should be named as generals leading an army to battle: but so it was afore declared in the prophetic word: "The beast that ascendeth out of the bottomless pit," the vivid type of the Roman papal power, was to "make war with the saints, and to overcome them."

The amount of the combined forces is very variously stated; but fifty thousand is the lowest estimate of the regular troops; and to these we must add a large multitude of disorderly followers, who joined them in order to share the plunder, the spoil, and the blessing pro-

mised by the holy see to all partakers in the crusade. Raymond met them at Valence, and became their guide, as had been appointed, to the town of Montpellier, where they made a pause, the legate enthroning himself as usual, in supreme authority, civil, military, and ecclesiastical. Young Raymond Roger, still solicitous to preserve his subjects from this terrible flood of enemies, now rolling onward to their doors, and bold in conscious integrity, here made a last effort to obtain what he soon found to be unattainable in that quarter, righteous judgment. Personally he appeared before Arnold, and pleaded once more his unshaken allegiance to the church, towards which he declared he had never done or intended any wrong. He denied having received or supported any heretics ; and desired that if any officers or subjects of his had so done, they, not he, might be held responsible ; adding that these officers had governed his territories up to the present time. He again professed himself the servant of the church ; and in that character demanded favour. Happily for him, as we trust, his suit was rejected ; the legate told him to defend himself as best he might, for that no mercy would be shown him. Once more the young noble called around him his attached followers, and communicated the result of his appeal. It was probably made at their instance ; for the spectacle of those fierce and formidable troops, led on by the prelate of a church from which not many had openly separated ; and invested with a fictitious sanctity more alarming to weak consciences than was their martial prowess to an unequal force, might well cause the bravest heart to shrink, when his

own home, with all its precious inmates, was the avowed object of their sanguinary attack. The rejection, however, of Raymond Roger's appeal, convinced them that they had nothing to hope from concession ; that the purpose of the papacy was to destroy, not to reconcile, those who had once dared to assume even the semblance of independence ; and that their only alternative now rested in a vigorous defence of such posts as might be considered tenable, while others, less favourably circumstanced, they must be content to abandon to the advancing banditti. Where there was no excuse for charging a community with the existence of heretical taint, a weighty ransom in gold was likely to be accepted ; and so it was at Caussadi, St. Antonin, and one or two other places ; two castles were left tenantless, and worthless to either party : and one was burnt ; but all this involved no recorded sacrifice of life. Chasseneuil was the first fortress that offered a determined resistance, and here was the work of martyrdom commenced.

It must be always borne in mind that our only informants on the subject of these murderous expeditions are the aggressors themselves. They, with their attention eagerly fixed on the grand object in view, have passed lightly over what to them appeared but minor events, to dwell with fuller emphasis on the achievements that gave whole provinces into their hands. Of Chasseneuil they have said very little, for it was only a step on the way to Beziers and Carcassonne ; but we are told that the garrison made a vigorous defence, until obliged to capitulate ; and we know in what array, and under

what circumstances the assailants advanced. Considering that the garrison was principally composed of men who nominally held the Romish faith, and whose laxity of devotion in the service of the Church was the effect of enlarged intellect, not of enlightened conscience; who were born, and who fully intended to die in her communion, and who, in the midst of their preparations for defending their lives and their property from an invading army, still professed the most unshaken allegiance to the papal see; considering all this, we must marvel that the sights and sounds most palpable among the advancing host, did not at once unman them all.

For there, sanctioning, and as he would fain have it held, sanctifying the onset, rode conspicuously the representative of the sovereign pontiff, surrounded by all the paraphernalia of his sacerdotal assumptions. There, in impious mimicry of the ark of the Lord, which did indeed by its presence both sanction and sanctify the marches of the Israelites of old, was borne on high the deified wafer, before which every knee had been taught to bow, not as the representative, but as the actual living, divine reality of Christ's glorified body: so that they who planted it in their van, pretended, and by the great bulk of their opponents were believed, to be under the personal leadership of the Mighty God. The banners that floated over their lines bore the impress of the cross, to fight against which was, in the superstitious apprehension of unenlightened minds, to fight against the Redeemer; and in like manner, the sounds that rose high above the clang of armour, and

the heavy tread of the compact legions, were not those of martial clarion,—not the mimic thunder of the drum; or the trumpet-call that rouses alike the animal courage of the horse and his rider: no, these might accord with scenes of mere earthly strife; but this was the battle of hell, waged in the name and in the seeming panoply of heaven; and, therefore, we are told by the Romish chroniclers of Rome's bloody deeds, that the music of that march was furnished by the deep, loud voices of the multitude of priests, who, arrayed in their robes, and surrounding the wafer-god of their infatuated idolatry, pealed forth in mighty chorus the Latin hymn, 'VENI CREATOR SPIRITUS.'

Yes, they chaunted forth, in loud and solemn fervency, that really beautiful invocation to the Holy Ghost, often heard in the midst of our worshipping congregations, who can join in it, without, perhaps, one aspiration of thankfulness to the Lord, that they are by grace delivered from the grasp of that tremendous lie which taught its votaries that He, the Spirit of truth,

Whose blessed unction from above,
Is comfort, fire, and light of love,

was to be invoked to direct and preside over the bloodiest deeds of cruelty, violence, and torturing death, that men in the utmost phrenzy of unbridled ferocity could perpetrate against their defenceless fellow-creatures. Oh, if we were to select one solitary instance, whereby to prove the diabolical character of the Romish-delusion, and to establish beyond a cavil its title to the distinguishing name of the Antichrist, we would point to the crusaders, rushing on their blood-stained

way, with the transubstantiated wafer in their van, and the priestly invocation to the Holy Ghost pealing in their ears. Mystery of iniquity ! next after the depth of the riches of the wisdom and knowledge of God, surely thou, tremendous pit of Satanic darkness, art the most unsearchable of all things !

It is no marvel that, thus assailed, the garrison of Chassenuel made an unavailing stand. After some hard fighting, they capitulated, and obtained permission to march out, with what they could carry about them ; but no terms were listened to as respected the unarmed inhabitants. It was known that the Gospel leaven had found entrance there ; that some few of the scattered saints who were the real objects of this iniquitous war, and whom it was Satan's purpose to root out, were mingled with the population. Accordingly they were abandoned to the merciless host, who permitted the soldiers to depart, and then burst in upon the helpless citizens. It was their first prize ; the first-fruits of their sanguinary toils ; and whatsoever of unbounded crime and cruelty the Evil Spirit could suggest, and the Lord God of heaven saw meet to permit, that they perpetrated. To select the followers of a true faith from among the inhabitants, was not worth their while : when nothing more remained for their victims to suffer but death, these wretched criminals kindled fires where-soever they could, and, amid the applauding acclamations of the crusaders, and the triumphant *Te Deums* of the priesthood, they hurled them all into the flames.

It is one of the dreadful concomitants of war, that a conquering army will use to the uttermost its fearful

power over a vanquished enemy. The capture of a fortified place is followed by scenes that humanity shudders to contemplate ; and as, alas ! cruelty is one of the evil dispositions of man's natural heart, very savage deeds of wanton cruelty, revenging upon the innocent, real or imaginary offences committed by others, will stain, more or less, the hands of men who are so permitted to follow their own will. But we must carefully discriminate the slaughter of the Albigensic victims, throughout this impious campaign, from all that belongs to war in general. No man, ostensibly, slew an Albigensic captive to avenge his own quarrel, or to glut his own cruelty. It was done as an acceptable service to God : it was regarded as an act of such transcendent merit, that even to devote forty days to the mere attempt was sufficient compensation for the sins of a long life, and ample purchase-money for heaven. The shouts that arose from the crusaders as the naked bodies of those inoffensive sufferers writhed, and blackened, and crackled in the flame, were ascriptions of praise to the God of all mercy that He had given into their hands those whom they held it meritorious so to torture and to kill ; and if there was one among them of a disposition naturally tender and humane, who would rather have rescued a fellow-creature from suffering than inflicted a needless pang, that person would score down to himself a larger amount of merit, seeing that he had sacrificed inclination to duty, and become a tormentor and a murderer for the love of God. The deeper we explore these times and scenes, and the characters that figured in them, the more perfectly shall we be enabled

to identify all with the prophetic word that foretels with wonderful minuteness the eventful history of the Church of God.

Henceforth the tale must be one of mourning and lamentation and woe, so far as the visible and temporal things are concerned ; but, looking to the things that are unseen and eternal, we may find matter for a song of rejoicing praise, where flesh can only shudder, and humanity weep. For this great onset upon the Church of Christ, Satan had all along chosen his instruments with the craft and subtilty that are peculiarly his ; and now he could look on a widely-extended field of victims, of whom by far the most pitiable were the shedders of innocent blood. We count them happy who endured, even unto death, the afflictions and persecutions whereof the Lord has forewarned His followers ; but how terrible the discovery to be made sooner or later by the persecutors, that the master whose bidding they hastened to do was indeed the prince of darkness ; and the wages of their work, everlasting death ! Yet this compassion has its limits too ; for the God of grace and of mercy left not himself without such witness, even in the few and mutilated fragments of scriptural truth that were still retained in the system and the services of Rome, as sufficed to condemn the sanguinary, the licentious, the graspingly avaricious cravings that were openly fostered and pandered to in these infamous wars. A man may be believed to act conscientiously according to his views of duty, however mistaken, who famishes, lacerates, and otherwise mortifies his body ; because there are several passages in

the New Testament very capable of being so wrested ; and he may, in the like sincerity of error hold it meritorious to repeat long prayers, to perform many superstitious acts, and to render undue honour to those whom he believes to be divinely gifted for his guidance in spiritual matters : but the conscience must indeed be seared with a hot iron, and given over to believe a soul-destroying lie, through real, wilful disbelief of the most obvious truths, before the same individual can profess to believe in the Lamb of God, who taketh away the sin of the world ;—can avow himself a follower of One who, as he knows, came not to destroy men's lives, but to save,—and at the same time number among the most acceptable services to be rendered to that God and Saviour, the cold-blooded slaughter of his fellow-creatures ; the plunder of their possessions, and the wanton, savage destruction of all that he cannot render subservient to his own selfish and sinful purposes. Such was ever the principle of papal rule ; such was solemnly declared and established as its deliberate doctrine, at the very period of which we write. The fourth Lateran Council, with its unrepealed decrees and murderous denunciations, placed the fact beyond dispute, as we shall by and by see.

Chassenueil having fallen, and leaving nothing but a blackened heap of ruins, sprinkled far and wide with the ashes of the bodies that had been burned in heaps within it, the next point of attack was Beziers. Here Raymond Roger was known to have strongly fortified himself, with a garrison of chosen knights, and devoted citizens, of whom a large proportion were undoubtedly

alienated from the idolatries of Rome before the present revolting act of aggression roused their spirit to resist her cruelty. The proceedings in this place were so characteristic of all parties, that they deserve as detailed an account as existing records will admit of.

The bishop of the diocese, Reginald of Montpeyrroux, employed himself in a diligent search after all upon whom he could fasten any charge of heresy, and having made out a list of every suspected family and person, he used his official privilege to seek an interview with the legate, who was now advancing with the army ; placed the document in his hands, and required in the name of their holy mother church that the individuals so marked out should be committed to the flames. Having executed this sacred mission, he returned to his flock, as from a mere compulsory visit of duty to the Pope's representative, and magnified to the uttermost the dangers that impended over them, describing in the most alarming terms the numerical and physical strength of the assailing bands. He wrought artfully upon the secret apprehensions that agitated many bosoms when they found that their young chief, after visiting Beziers, inspecting its fortifications and stores, and encouraging the garrison, instead of staying to superintend the defence in person, withdrew to the stronger position of Carcassonne; which, in the event of their fall would be the next to endure an assault. The bishop well knew the disheartening effect of the young Count's departure, and he made the most of it. Assembling the citizens in the church of St. Nicaise, he addressed them from the altar ; and concluded an artful harangue by

offering them, in the legate's name, favourable terms, provided they would only deliver up those who were known among them as schismatics from the Romish communion. By so doing, he assured them, they might, but in no other way could they, preserve themselves, their wives and children, from the horrors of such pillage and massacre as would follow a successful assault, and their souls from the tremendous wrath of heaven and the church. They paused, for the peril was imminent, and very terrible indeed was the glittering array that overspread every part of the surrounding country ; as, like a swarm of locusts, the crusaders advanced on their prey. They paused, but it was only for a moment: the reflection of a purer light, shining on them from the scattered few who themselves reflected the image of Christ, had dispelled much of the darkness that broods where Popery reigns. With a burst of noble enthusiasm, they drowned the voice of the tempter, crying out, 'No : tell the legate that our city is good and strong ; that in this our great necessity, the Lord our God will be our succour ; and that, rather than commit the treacherous act suggested to us, we will eat our own children.'

The population of Beziers, including garrison, citizens, and all classes, is stated by some to have amounted to sixty thousand persons : others rate it much lower. Stout hearts, strong hands, and a righteous cause combined to encourage them against the great and terrible armament that drew nearer and nearer to their walls, spreading such a multitude of tents and gay pavilions,

and displaying so formidable a host of warriors, as proved that the description of their treacherous bishop, which they would fain have regarded as an extravagant fable, was not even an exaggeration of the reality. As yet, the enemy was busily employed in forming and strengthening a camp, from which it was probable the host must carry on the operations of a protracted siege ; for Beziers was a powerful-looking place, with its solid walls, and massive square towers ; crowning an abrupt height with a broad deep river at its base. The citizens beholding these preparations, and seeing the abundant means provided for effectually prosecuting the work when all should be fitly arranged, considered it the most favourable moment for a sally : they formed in a body, and rushed down, with impetuous courage, upon the foe. These, however, had the advantage, in point of numbers, of ferocity, and of being long inured to deeds of blood ; and the people of God had been given, for a time, into the hand of the wicked and cruel one. The infantry sustained the shock unmoved ; then, becoming the assailants, they speedily turned the disheartened citizens, drove them back, and in one dense mass of pursuers and pursued, they all entered the gates together. Beziers was in the hands of the crusaders.

The great strength of this fortified town, had drawn within its walls multitudes of the villagers, and scattered inhabitants of a wide surrounding district. All the rural population were assembled there ; and among them, undoubtedly, a large proportion of those against whom the wrath of the dragon and of the beast was

especially kindled—the true worshippers of God, who served Him in the Gospel of his Son. There were, however, very many, whose allegiance to Rome could not be questioned, and who were fully bent to die as they had lived, in her communion. This was known to the knights, who had been accustomed in the mis-called ‘holy wars’ to discriminate carefully as to their victims. The butchery of Saracens, and, perhaps even more, that of God’s ancient, afflicted people Israel, was with them a matter of meritorious duty ; but to embue their hands in the blood of such as bowed down to the same crucifix, and worshipped the same wafer, and invoked the same dead saints with themselves, would have appeared a departure from their prescribed path. Accordingly, when it was ascertained that Beziers was in their hands, and that, of course, the heretics must fall, some of these commanders came to the legate, Arnold Amalric, with the natural question of—How they were to distinguish the Catholics from the heretics ? The reply of the Abbot has been recorded by his own friends and followers, or it would scarcely be credible. He answered, ‘ Kill them all ! the Lord will know well those that are his !’

While this was going on, the poor devoted flock crowded into the churches, as though any sanctuary existed for them, which the wolves of Rome might respect. There were in Beziers a great majority of women and children, sent to those strong walls for protection by husbands and fathers, who themselves remained to garrison posts deemed less impregnable. These, with the whole body of citizens and refugees, took shelter in

the places of worship, unless when their feeble steps were overtaken by the murderer's rapid stride, and their course cut short in blood. The large cathedral church of St. Nicaise was completely thronged : and the canons, ministers as they were of the Romish religion, investing themselves with the sacerdotal habit, which surely, they thought, must be a sufficient protection against the soldiers of their own faith, ranged themselves round the altar. No voice could have been heard, in supplication, amid the din, and the crash, and the shrieks of that fearful scene of blood ; but the poor canons sounded the consecrated bells, in deep, and melancholy, and appealing toll, hoping so to touch the hearts of the fierce assailants. In vain ! Rome leaves her conscience-seared votaries with hearts no less effectually seared into utter insensibility to the pleadings of pity : the tide of cowardly massacre rolled on ; cut down, and crushed beneath the armed heel, and mangled with the spear, one after another the victims fell, as the blood-stained fanatics approached the altar ; and there the canons also fell, hurled upon the general heap, while the progress of the work was marked by the ceasing of successive bells, as the hands that tolled them fell powerless in death ; and the silence that followed the last sad note proclaimed the consummation of that fearful massacre. The dead bodies that lay, bathed in blood, on the pavement of one church, the Magdalen, amounted to seven thousand. The babe at its mother's breast, the aged man beneath his daughter's arms, vainly uplifted to defend his silver locks, while her own bright ringlets were dripping blood. Yes ; they *killed them all !*

There is a world into which the eye of living man hath not pried, and of which the fearful secrets are but dimly revealed in the parables of Him who made all worlds. There is a place where the ungodly rich man "being in torments, lifted up his eyes, and saw Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom." How tremendously awful is the solemn thought, the assured fact, that of all who slew, and of all who were slain, at the bidding of Arnold Amalric and his wretched confederates, not one has perished ; each and all are now in existence, awaiting the day when they must stand before the judgment-seat of Christ ! Centuries have passed, and their names and their deeds are bygone things ; but not one among them, persecutor or persecuted, destroyer or destroyed, has ever known a moment's oblivion of that scene. The people of the Lord, faithful unto death, washed from every stain in the blood of the Lamb, entered into rest, commencing the eternal song of praise ; and looking forward to the great day of final vengeance, when the enemies of Christ shall for ever be put under his feet. The spirits in that dark and dreary prison, whence there is no egress, save to final judgment and to public doom, feel in the recollection of those dreadful deeds the gnawings of a worm that dieth not, the kindlings of a fire that cannot be quenched ; and Arnold Amalric can reiterate with terrible meaning the words of his blasphemous mock : ' The Lord will know well those who are his ! '

The massacre occupied a very short period : where no resistance could be offered, and the victims were thronged within a limited space, the work of cutting

them down was easy and expeditious. This being done, plunder was the next concern. Such of the decrepit, the sick, and otherwise helpless as had been unable to leave their dwellings, were speedily butchered there, and all that could tempt the hand of rapacity, from the costly elegances of the palace, to the simple but treasured heir-loom of the modest cottage, was grasped and appropriated, as if to perfect the antitype of that traitor who also 'was a thief, and bare the bag, and stole what was put therein.' So easy a conquest, so sweeping a massacre, and so rich a booty, could not but tend greatly to encourage the invaders. Masses were celebrated, and thanksgivings pealed forth by thousands of voices, to the God of holiness, and love, and peace ; while the blood of His saints, that day shed like water on every side, coagulated upon the spot where those vain worshippers stood ; and the unburied corpses, with glassy stare fixed on the sky, presented an appeal not overlooked by Him, who has said, " Vengeance is mine : I will repay."

The closing act of this savage tragedy was to set fire to the stately city in every quarter, consuming with it the immense mass of its slaughtered inhabitants. So perfect was the work of destruction, that not a single dwelling remained, nor aught that fire could destroy, of that proud Beziers in which, next to Carcassonne, Raymond Roger and his subjects placed their trust, as being able to hold at bay, for an indefinite length of time, the crusading army. These, it must be remembered, had only engaged to serve for forty days ; and every hour was rendered precious to the assailed, by the hope, that

a protracted defence might reach to the termination of this limited engagement. The dark volumes of smoke, and red glare of flame that rose from the lofty turrets of Beziers, told a tale of terror and dismay to the surrounding country. Every place was presently deserted, from the strong but isolated castle to the lowly shepherd's hut, and the vine-dresser's lodge. No hope of security remained for these scattered ones, except within the walls of Carcassonne, where Raymond Roger still encouraged his people to hold out; cheering by his presence and undaunted bearing their hearts, of which, perhaps, none were really sadder than his own. But the forest depths, and mountain caves, and passes known only to native feet, afforded a refuge to numbers who either were unable to reach the fortress, or doubted the issue of an assault upon it; and who preferred the perils and privations of such concealment, to the issue of a siege. Perchance too, there were among these some who scrupled to use the carnal weapon in what they felt to be the battle of the faith. It was no new page in the history of God's church that they of whom the world was not worthy, should be destitute, afflicted, tormented, wandering about, in dens and caves of the earth.

After the one day's deadly work at Beziers, the exulting host set forward again, spreading over the country, according to the information of the traitors, chiefly ecclesiastics, who acted as their guides to the castles of the nobles. These they found, indeed, strongly fortified by nature and art, but altogether deserted by their inhabitants. More than a hundred of them they burned

to the ground, desolating the lands, destroying the vintage, and fulfilling to the uttermost of their power the type of the locust army. It was on the first of August that they found themselves within sight of Carcassonne. Here, beside the Aube, they hastily encamped without molestation, and prepared to assail it on the following day.

The leader in this attack was Simon de Montfort, Earl of Leicester, whose character stands out in frightful prominence, embodying all that was most flagitious in perfidy, most grasping in avarice and ambition, most pitiless in cruelty, and most grovelling in the debasing superstition which, if he felt it not, he at least assumed, as the divine warrant for all his crimes. By the mother's side, his English ancestry was noble, and distinguished, tracing its root to royalty ; but his birth was French, and he had devoted his life to the service of the nominal church ; having especially made himself conspicuous in the Eastern Crusades. Nothing could better accord with the bent of this man's mind than the present war with the Saints. He hated with deadly venom the faith and the followers of Jesus, and sweet to his spirit must have been the dying cries that resounded through Beziers. Impatient to renew the scene, he led his troops to an attack on the outermost suburb of Carcassonne ; but he was met by Raymond Roger, at the head of his gallant knights and citizens, who, during a combat of two hours, repulsed the enemy. The suburb was, however, weakly fortified, in comparison with other quarters, and at length its defenders abandoned it, retiring into the second suburb, which de Montfort also

attempted to carry, but in vain. For the space of eight days the young Viscount made good his position, continually driving back, with considerable loss, the besieging body. At the end of that time, he deliberately fired the buildings that composed it, so depriving the enemy of any advantage that they might have derived from its possession ; and leaving it a mass of smoking ruin, he retreated into the city.

Imagination would fain picture the throng of anxious faces that looked down from the rampart-walls upon their gallant chief and his companions in arms, while thus holding at bay the ferocious conquerors of Beziers. There were many whose dearest earthly ties had there been cut asunder by the Crusader's sword, without having even fallen under the suspicion of disloyalty to Rome ; and many others who were more than willing to shed their own life-blood in testimony to the faith of the gospel, witnessing against her abominations. There was not one, perhaps, who did not feel a personal, loving interest in the noble Raymond Roger ; and it would be little short of sinful unbelief to doubt that the supplications offered on his behalf, through the alone Name of the all-sufficient Saviour, were heard and answered in the revelation of the Son of God to his soul. Once more, having abandoned the useless suburb, Raymond found himself in the midst of his people ; and with full purpose of heart he prepared to defend the stout ramparts of Carcassonne.

But flesh and blood were not all against which he had to contend : it was an hour when the powers of darkness had permission to prevail against the Lord's

people, and against their honest-hearted protector. Inured as we are to contemplate the dark deeds of papal perfidy, glorying in its deepest shame, there is still that in the villainy perpetrated against the young Count, that kindles afresh the flame of indignation, extorting the apostrophe addressed to a minor criminal of old, "O full of all subtlety and mischief, thou child of the devil, thou enemy of all righteousness, wilt thou not cease to pervert the right ways of the Lord !"

The sovereign to whom Raymond Roger had vowed fealty, was Peter II., King of Arragon, who was also his uncle ; and though a slave to the papacy in spiritual matters, still alive to the cruel injustice done to the young noble ; and to the perfidy of the Count of Toulouse, whose presence here and at Beziers must not be forgotten. The Spanish king, repairing to the camp, addressed himself to this unhappy nobleman, who had married his sister, and urged him to unite in an effort on Raymond Roger's behalf, offering to act as mediator between the parties. The legate, to whom of course the proposal was communicated, gladly availed himself of such unexpected means for obtaining information of what was going on within the city, accepted the good offices of the king, and issued orders for the suspension of hostilities while the royal negociator was engaged in his humane task. It was a spectacle of moving interest to the harassed sufferers, the approach of their monarch. Walls and bastions, turrets and platforms were thronged by eager gazers : the marksmen stood prepared, alert on the watch to detect any movement of treachery in the camp ; but all was quiet there. Car-

cassonne presented one living mass of anxious, yet trusting and undismaying inhabitants, while the drawbridge clanked heavily as it fell, the dark portcullis slowly rose, the massive bolts of successive gates were withdrawn, and the dense body of armed men fell partially back, opening a sufficient space for the king and his few attendants to pass on. The heart of Peter, already awakening to a sympathy with his persecuted people which ultimately led him to yield his life in the battle against Rome, now swelled as he received their loyal greetings, and yearned with paternal love towards the noble young man who knelt at his feet in affectionate homage.

Having ascertained from the Viscount his willingness to submit to any fair and honourable terms of capitulation, for the sake of the helpless multitudes who had taken refuge there, and who must perish in a protracted siege, as already they had begun to do, under the presence of terror, sickness and privation, 'but for whom,' said Raymond, 'I swear to your Majesty that I and my own people would rather die of famine than surrender to the legate,' Peter returned to the camp; and, strangely ignorant of the spirit of those with whom he had to deal, endeavoured by representing the young noble's extremity, together with his elevated self-devotion, to kindle in the bosoms of Rome's delegates what Rome never knew—compassion for the afflicted, and sympathy with the generous. Arnold Amalric, rejoiced to have engaged so useful though unconscious a tool for his iniquitous designs, heard the king out; then, as a matter of special grace to his Majesty's kinsman,

yielded permission for Raymond Roger to select twelve individuals, with whom he might quit the city unmolested ; but the sacred cause of the most holy Church demanded that with this exception, all should be abandoned to her mercy !

Dark and sad was the brow of the kingly mediator as he re-entered the gates, flung wide with joyous alacrity to admit his returning steps ; and sorely did his royal spirit writhe beneath the fetter of papal bondage, as he delivered to the Viscount the mocking message with which he was charged. All the generous ardour of Raymond Roger's character was roused into a flame ; he looked round on the terrified multitude, who had too truly read in the king's countenance the failure of his mission ; he looked on the faithful companions who had fought beside him every day, and patiently held with him the long night's watch ; and while the glow of indignation mantled his cheek, he answered with vehement energy, ' Rather will I submit to be flayed alive ! The legate shall not have at his mercy the least of my companions ; of these who, for my sake, have braved the dangers that surround us.'

Instead of urging the acceptance of Arnold's insolent terms, the king of Arragon warmly applauded his nephew's reply ; and then, turning to the knights and citizens, who gathered eagerly around him, he exhorted them to defend themselves, as the only alternative ; seeing what they had to expect in the event of surrendering. Surely, as that monarch repassed the draw-bridge of Carcassonne, he must have felt the iron of Rome's despotism entering his very soul. So, sooner

or later, will all do, who lend their power to the Beast, or even suspend the resistance on which depends their self-preservation. The king of Arragon, as he bore back, with a forced semblance of personal courtesy, that noble defiance to the inflated priest, must have envied the exalted position of the poorest citizen who had barred the gate on his retreating steps. A fearful account have those monarchs to render who connive at the spread, or even at the existence of the papal usurpation over souls committed to their parental charge!

Scarcely had the king quitted the legate's gorgeous pavilion, making known what every one was fully prepared to hear, ere a fresh and furious assault was made upon the walls of Carcassonne. With ferocious shoutings, cheering on each other to the work, the army brought faggots, which they cast into the ditches, endeavouring so to fill the chasm, and form a path to the ramparts. Very little opposition was offered, and they reached the walls, intending to scale them; when a sudden deluge of water and oil, heated to a boiling pitch, with masses of stone, bars of iron, and missiles of every description, were hurled upon them from above; and this was repeated as often as they rallied to the charge, until many lay slain, and serious discouragement manifested itself in the host, who considered that their stipulated work was to murder and to plunder, not to wage equal war with men of courage and of strength. Confident assurances of a miraculous interposition had been spread among them, to heighten their fanatic zeal; recollection that their forty days' engagement was well nigh expired, combining with the spectacle of their

slaughtered comrades beneath the walls, began to operate so unfavourably, that the crafty legate perceived he must strike a final blow, or behold the escape of a prey that he could not endure to lose. Employing the arts that rarely fail, he so won over a gentleman in his retinue whom he knew to be a kinsman and early friend of Raymond Roger, as to induce him to become a decoy for that noble-minded young man ; who, on his part, desired nothing so much as to obtain for his companions the amnesty which he was assured would be accorded to them, could he but himself fairly plead a cause that he knew to be righteous and just. The legate's bait was, therefore, presently taken : Raymond Roger asked and obtained a safe-conduct for himself and such companions as he should bring with him, into the presence of the legate : and back to the city if their negotiation failed. Solemn oaths confirmed the pledge, on the part of the crusading leaders, who all joined in the legate's guarantee ; and, thus assured, the young lord of the desolated Beziers placed himself at the head of three hundred chosen knights, and marched forth—lambs into an assemblage of wolves ; unsuspecting birds flying into the snare of the fowler !

In the legate's pavilion all the principal leaders were assembled ; and they masked their foul design, and gazed with concealed triumph on their innocent prey, while, in a speech full of the noblest sentiments of princely and chivalric devotion, if no higher and holier principle was set forth in it, he defended his own conduct, and pleaded the cause of his people. He ceased, and awaited the legate's reply : it was given, as Rome generally re-

plies to the plea of reason and conscience. In a moment the overpowering rush of armed men decided the matter : Raymond Roger was disarmed, bound, and delivered as a traitor to the custody of the dark and merciless Simon de Montfort. His knights were in like manner seized, and within sight of the agonized citizens of Carcassonne all were led away in captivity : to what fate might easily be conjectured. The shout of anticipated triumph, of unbounded vengeance, rose high from the perfidious camp towards the walls of the city that should on the morrow reek with such blood, and blacken under such flames as had recently swept through Beziers. But such was not the Lord's will : an ancient subterranean passage of several leagues in length existed, known but to a few of the most trusty burgesses ; and wholly unsuspected by the enemy. In the darkness of evening, the whole population entered this cavern, and closing after them its secret mouth, they journeyed on ; in darkness, and in silence, and in sorrow ; weeping the fate of their beloved chief, and the rending of many a fond tie never to be re-united on earth : but they went safely ; and the morning sun shone on the deserted towers of Carcassonne, lightning the ravenous eagle on his path, not to seize the prey, and revel in his wonted feast of blood, but to ascertain that, by means wholly inexplicable, that prey had escaped ; and the only vital streams he might hope to drain were those of his noble, his betrayed captives of yesterday.

No means were neglected by Arnold Amalric to make a fair show of what was universally felt as a baffling

and mortifying discomfiture. He caused it to be reported that he, acting in his irresponsible capacity of spiritual leader, had seen good to permit the secret evacuation of Carcassonne by the bulk of its inhabitants, having first secured the person of the contumacious Raymond Roger, and of a certain number of suspected heretics, who would be immolated in the midst of the deserted city. He entered its walls with the usual warlike pomp of his most incongruous command ; took formal possession of all the spoil in the name of the Church, and then prepared the spectacle that was to gratify his sanguinary band of fanatics.

In addition to the three hundred gallant knights who had accompanied Raymond Roger, on the strength of the legate's safe conduct, and who had, with him, been treacherously overpowered and imprisoned, the scouts of the army had captured a number of poor fugitives in the act of escaping by mountain-passes, and through forest tracts, from the beleaguered city. Many of these were women ; mothers with their infants, and maidens seeking to rescue their still younger brothers and sisters from the sword of slaughter, or hastening in silent panic to hide themselves, after the terrific view obtained from the walls, of that fierce band of violent and cruel men. From all these, Arnold selected four hundred and fifty individuals, as lying under just suspicion of heresy, and condemned them to public execution. To vary the spectacle, and as far as he could to gratify the taste of his followers, he ordered fifty of these to be hanged, while four hundred were burnt alive. At Beziers, the work was a general massacre ; this bore more

of the aspect of a martyrdom. There, the word was "Kill them all!" here, from a limited number, entrapped by shameful fraud, or seized by cruel force, a selection was made, and every individual suffered as a Christian. We humbly trust that all among them deserved the name; that such as had not fled from the sorceries of Great Babylon, and laid hold on the free mercies of God in Christ Jesus, were enabled so to do, in that day of calamity, and were made worthy of the martyr's crown. The day is coming, that shall reveal all these things; and when the past is laid open to our view, with all its horrors, when we see before us those who were most cruelly tortured and slain for the testimony of Jesus, we may comprehend somewhat of the spirit of that exulting apostrophe, "Rejoice! ye heavens, and ye holy apostles and prophets: for God hath avenged you of her!"

The last emblem of the fading fires had died away, and the suspended bodies waved, cold and rigid, in every light breeze that swept over the lofty turrets of Carcassonne, and none survived but the captive in his lonely dungeon, of all who had peopled the busy scene, and had owned its many habitations. In their stead was to be seen a motley crew, gathered from among all classes, and wearing the costume respectively of France, of England, Germany, Italy, and the provinces. Innumerable, and active beyond all others, were the swarms of priests and friars, passing to and fro, kindling and keeping alive the spirit of merciless bigotry in the bosoms of men who regarded them as their only guides to heaven; and who never paused to enquire how far

the doctrines taught, the example set, and the actions prompted by them accorded with the universally admitted fact, that the God whom they professed to represent is a God of holiness and mercy ; of truth and love. But for these firebrands of Rome, the flame of persecution against God's heritage had never been kindled : under their rule it was likely never to be quenched, while one mortal was supposed to breathe, independent of the papal will.

Grouped together, in one of the open squares, near which hung the ghastly forms of several of Raymond Rogers's noble knights, might be seen some warriors of lofty bearing, whose brows were clouded, and their tones bespoke a swelling indignation. They were lords of France, who, while they saw the fairest scenes of their fertile country desolated, and the life-blood of their countrymen and countrywomen shed like water on every side by the hands of a foreign banditti, while murder in cold blood was the finale to every combat, and the vilest were selected to butcher the noble and the fair, had begun to ask themselves how far it consorted with their knightly and national honour to take part in such disgraceful scenes at the bidding of a monk. Arnold Amalric could not remain in ignorance of any whisper that was breathed touching the supreme power of Holy Church ; and this, of course, speedily reached his ears. He therefore prepared to meet the rising spirit of dissatisfaction, by a new prize for the ambitious to grasp at. He called a council, and set before the assembled nobles the necessity of placing the conquered provinces under the rule of some prince, whose martial prowess should

help forward the work, and his devotion to the Church prove a guarantee for his zealous co-operation in utterly exterminating heresy. The viscounties of Beziers and Carcassonne were now at his disposal ; and he concluded by declaring his intention of conferring them on the Duke of Burgundy. That prince, however, much to the legate's dismay, not only rejected the gift, but declared that they had done Raymond Roger wrong enough already, without also despoiling him of his heritage. Language so accordant with their newly-awakened feelings of compunction was eagerly echoed by other princes : The Count of Nevers, and the Count of St. Paul, to whom it was alternately offered, expressed themselves to the same effect ; and Arnold began to feel the perplexity of his situation ; and, to lighten the burden, took two bishops and four knights into commission with himself, to deliberate and decide on the fate of the desolated provinces. They made sure of their man before again subjecting their princely offer to a refusal. Simon de Montfort, avaricious, ambitious, cruel, and utterly without scruple as to the means by which his evil propensities were to be gratified, was not likely to decline the gift, or to shrink from the deed that would most effectually confirm it. He accepted the lordship of his noble prisoner, Raymond Roger ; and he sealed the contract by administering to the Viscount, who, it will be remembered, was committed to his safe-keeping, a dose of poison.

It was publicly announced, with all due manifestations of regret, that Raymond Roger had died of a severe epedemic, and only the suspicion that must rest

on such an event, at that juncture and under those circumstances, could be brought to contradict it ; but the master-spirit of all this iniquity, the presiding Pope, has left it on record in his voluminous correspondence, that Raymond Roger died a violent death. In the Beast's war with the Saints, he thus fell, firmly espousing and faithfully upholding the cause of the saints : and we do trust, that the great day of the Lord will reveal him, numbered with the saints in glory everlasting.

But this assassination was not perpetrated until the November following the siege, although we may well believe that it formed part of the original plan. The wretched Count of Toulouse was an eye-witness to all that his cowardly perfidy had brought on his noble nephew, and the many thousands of innocent victims whose blood cried aloud from the ground. But no hope could exist that the Viscount of Beziers would ever so bend his neck beneath the yoke. Excommunication having been fulminated against him, followed by forcible deposition and imprisonment, death only remained. He was no longer the lord of those magnificent domains, but a private individual, accused of heretical pravity. Nevertheless, the fact was plain, that he still reigned in the warmest affections of his people ; and it also became manifest that his brother nobles entertained a strong feeling of sympathy for his afflictions : they had come up to fight against him : and, blinded by the sorceries of Rome, they had connived at the infamous act by which he was decoyed, betrayed, and captured. Still, when they saw a comparative stranger, of character so

repulsive as de Montfort, taking high state upon him, and carrying on a war of extermination against the refugees who were now his subjects, as one by one he reduced the castles where they had endeavoured to fortify themselves, these nobles were moved by a spirit of commiseration for the young Viscount, that might ripen into something dangerous to Simon's ill-acquired power ; and hence the execution of the last enormity—the murder of the imprisoned Raymond.

The expiration of the forty days had found de Montfort embarrassed by his recent acquisition ; and had all the crusaders then returned to their homes, he might have sought in vain to make good his hold on the prey : but though many withdrew, others were found willing to prolong the term of their service, in the prospect of farther blood and spoil. Besides, they were now in some sort under the leadership of him who assumed to be lord of the territory, and who would have it in his power to reward, with permanent advantages, such as might show themselves zealous in assisting to establish his dominion. Here we see the craft and subtlety of Satan and his agents : much of the fierce fanatic zeal that led the army forth, had now been quenched in blood ; many who seriously made the bargain with God's pretended vicegerent, purchasing absolution for all their sins at the regular price of forty days' service in the cause of "the church," having fulfilled their part of the compact, recognized no further claim upon them. It was, therefore, needful to prepare some new bait ; and this was done, by placing before them not only heretics to extirpate, but rebels to subdue : not only towns to

sack, with a general scramble for portable spoil, but broad lands to be parcelled out, and fair portions to be bestowed by a sovereign prince, under whose banner they were invited to enlist ; while he professed no other object than that of doing the will of the church, and conquering the whole country, that he might lay it at the feet of the Pope, wholly purged of whatsoever had dared to exalt the Gospel of Christ above the bulls of the Vatican. Simon de Montfort knew well his position ; he had withheld his acceptance of his captives' possessions, until the bishops publicly threw themselves at his feet, imploring him to assume that authority in order to avenge the quarrel of the Church, and to crush her audacious enemies, whom they represented as being too numerous, and through the countenance afforded by the barons, too powerful, to be subdued without the aid of the secular arm of military prowess. The war, from first to last, and in all its bearings, was avowedly waged against those whom God designates as his saints ; and Simon de Montfort might just as well have aimed to seize the crown of France or of England as the viscounties of Beziers and Carcassonne, had he stood forward in any other capacity than that of the champion of the Church warring against heretics.

Yet, with all these facts spread before us on the page of history, recorded in the letters of Innocent III., and chronicled by Peter de Vaux Cernay, the exulting eye-witness of such atrocities as we have noticed and have yet to notice — with all this, it is actually become a point of honour with some Protestant writers, and ministers of religion too, in our day, to vindicate the

Church of Rome from the charge of persecuting cruelty ; to deny that she has ever made war upon the saints, or that they have been delivered into her hand ! In too many cases, this argument is pursued with a covert design of ultimately bringing back to Rome those who have happily "come out of her ;" in others, it is adopted to support a theory concerning the supposed futurity of the revelation of Antichrist ; but in either view it is an unwarrantable denial of some of the plainest facts that can be pointed out in the page of history ; a closing of the eyes against the most striking fulfilment of the prophetic word.

Yet worse, if possible : this argument can only be sustained by assisting to perpetrate, and to circulate more widely, the shameful calumnies uttered against Christ's little flock by their cruel destroyers. The blessing was not attached to persecution only ; there were other adjuncts, set forth by our Lord Himself. "Blessed are ye when men shall *revile* you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you, falsely, for my sake. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad, for great is your reward in heaven ; for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you." If this important mark of discipleship had been wanting : if the servant had been above his Lord, and the household had remained with characters unassailed, where the Master of the house had been called Beelzebub, we might indeed find cause to hesitate, and to ask,—Could these be the saints ? But no such difficulty meets us : charges the most foul, the most incredible ; charges precisely similar to some that were brought by the heathen

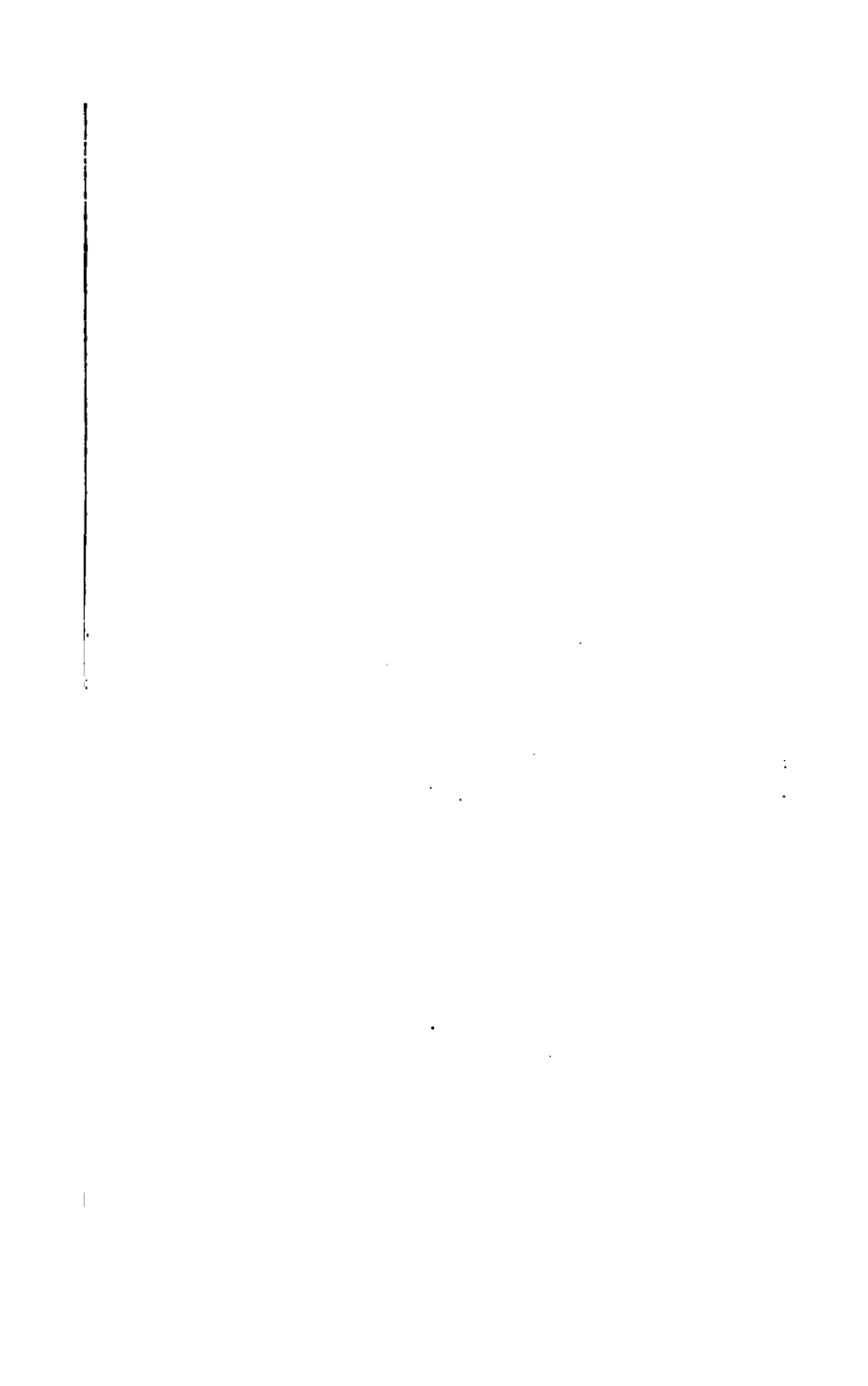
against those who formed the very earliest Church of Christ, were unsparingly heaped upon the harmless Albigenses, so completing the picture that in all its parts it was truly theirs. They were "poor in spirit;" humble, unobtrusive people, pursuing in quietness their lowly occupations. They "mourned;" not only the perpetual dishonour brought on the name of Christ by those who assumed to be his followers and his ministers, while living in the open practice of idolatry, and of every moral transgression, but the heavy calamities brought on a friendly people by their sojourn among them, and the certain fate that awaited them and theirs, gave them cause to mourn; always sorrowful, though always rejoicing. They were "meek:" marvellous are the instances of lamb-like resignation, unresisting submission to the hand that brandished the knife, heaped the faggot, or knotted the cord, that should send them by a violent death into the presence of the Lord. We never hear of the Albigenses, as such, taking up arms to defend themselves: the price at which mercy might have been obtained by the citizens of the assailed places, was that of delivering them up to the will of their enemies. Resistance on their part was never pre-supposed, either in the proffer or in the refusal of such terms. That they hungered and thirsted after righteousness, was, in fact, the very groundwork of the charge against them: their anxious search after simple truth, their rejection of all that militated against it; their diligent use of the means of grace, exhorting and confirming one another in the faith; their assemblages for prayer and praise, and breaking of bread; all these

things are notorious, as they hold that their enemies took on them. Had their's been a religion of negatives, they might have lived safely and quietly enough. That they were merciful, doing wrong to no man ; that purity of heart was evinced by a spotless life, is evident. The very name by which they were known in Italy,—Cathari,—expresses purity : and it was alleged against them as an aggravation of their heretical opinions, that they recommended them by such sanctity of conduct as drew many to listen to them. Peace-makers they were, in the fullest, highest sense of the word ; for not only did they lead lives of exemplary peaceableness, but they spread on all sides the gospel of everlasting peace ; even that peace which the blood of the cross makes between God and man. Persecuted, and that for righteousness' sake, they were, even to the death ; with the most savage and sanguinary persecution that Satan could devise and man carry out ; and here we have eight out of the nine marks by which our Lord describes those who are "blessed." But, on coming to the ninth, it is found to form the pre-eminently distinguishing feature of this afflicted Church ; and therefore—"O fools and blind!"—therefore the case is decided against them, and sometimes too by men whose office it is to remind the disciples of the Lord that he has also said, "Woe unto you when all men speak well of you ; for so did their fathers unto the false prophets."

But, leaving out of the question the actual characters of the Albigenses, let us turn to the vaunted Church of Christ, and enquire how she fulfilled her duty towards those whom she believed to be still in fatal error. It is

impossible for any searcher of God's word to be in doubt as to the course indicated for the Christian, whether lay or clerical, to take, in reference to such as disbelieve or even oppose the gospel. "Knowing the terrors of the Lord, we persuade men," not imprison, torture, and burn them. "Shewing out of a good conversation your works with meekness of wisdom"—not with the thunder of menace, and the violence of armed power. Above all, in the instructions expressly given, by divine inspiration, to one who was ordained to a highly responsible office in the Christian church, and through him to all who should hold the like authority, we have these emphatic words:—"The man of God must not strive, but be gentle unto all men, patient, in meekness instructing them that oppose themselves, if God, peradventure, will give them repentance unto salvation, that they may recover themselves from the snare of the devil, by whom they are led captive at his will." The very worst, most extravagant, most incredible charges brought against the Albigenses and other victims of Romish persecution, could not, if fully proved, amount to more than this—that they were entangled in the snares of the devil, and led captive by him at his will. Where is the gentleness, where the patience, where the meek instruction that the "man of God" is commanded especially to bring into prominence in such a case? Shall we seek them in the annals of Peter de Vaux Cernay, or in any annals, ecclesiastical or secular, of Papal Rome? Seeking, shall we find aught but the darkest, most fearful contrast to what the Holy Spirit has traced as the duty, the badge of

Christ's Church? Yet once again, "Brethren, if one of you be overtaken in a fault, ye that are spiritual restore such an one in the spirit of meekness, considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted. Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ!" That loving law of Him who came not to destroy men's lives, but to save them; who called on the sin-burdened pilgrim to learn of Him, the meek and lowly-hearted Saviour, that he might find rest unto his soul; who bade to bless, not to curse; yea, to return cursing with blessing, and hatred with love, and persecution with acts of benevolent good will—that law stands out in such dazzling contrast to the blackness of darkness that shrouds such deeds as we are compelled to recognize as the authorized and vaunted deeds of Romish cruelty throughout the blood-stained history of her iron rule, that we gaze with dismay upon the spectacle, and reject, on the strength of God's own word, the claim of the alien usurper to any part or lot in the matter of our faith and hope. "By their works ye shall know them."



CHAPTER FOURTH.



THE CAVERN.

THE FUTURE

BY J. H. B. HARRIS

OF THE



CHAPTER IV.

THE CAVERN.

It is now winter : heavy rains
have swept over the moun-
tain-ridges the fallen honours
of summer, and accumulated

in the narrow passes below a body of humid obstructions that render them well nigh impassable to unpractised steps. At intervals a narrow cave presents an opening, lately overhung with the mingled festoon of tangled wild flower and straggling vine, the pleasant retreat of the weary traveller or labouring hind, during the noontide hour, when the rays of a vertical sun streamed down into the little valley, but now steaming with unwholesome damps, sufficient to repel any foot from their chasms, however way-worn, and solicitous for momentary repose. The continual drip from overhanging heights, far above, and the frequent bursting of a miniature cascade from some gully where the waters had accumulated, rendered these low passes so uninviting during the wet season, that he who should have chosen to shape his course through one of them must not calculate on meeting a fellow man in their unwholesome recesses. The neighbouring peasants, and such as, in more genial seasons, would have preferred the sheltered glen, now took a more circuitous route, on firmer ground, and in a more elevated region.

Yet here it is that we must search, if we would meet with the scattered remnant of the Lord's exhausted flock ; once so fairly pastured where none made them afraid, under the kindly sway of Raymond Roger, viscount de Beziers. Wounded and torn, despoiled of the little all that once was theirs, hunted from their houses, and sprinkled in their flight with the life-blood of their nearest, dearest connexions, overtaken by the armed assassin's aim, these forlorn beings would still persist in assembling themselves together, for pur-

poses of prayer and praise and mutual exhortation ; though to do so they must brave danger in many forms, combining the possibility of discovery where every nook and corner was likely to be ransacked for a fresh victim, with the more certain perils of that most unwholesome atmosphere, leaguings as it seemed to do with merciless man for the destruction of the helpless.

Different indeed is the groupe that we shall now encounter from the peaceful little congregation formerly assembled in a spot no less peaceful than themselves. Not many aged pilgrims are here : the tottering step ever proved unequal to escape the powerful stride of pursuing hatred ; and in many instances the silver-haired Christian had offered himself more than willingly to death for the testimony of Jesus. But there were many of middle age, whose premature grey hairs bespoke a heavier burden of years than they had really borne, and whose frames, bent with sorrow and privation, and habitual crouching in low places for concealment, had lost the elasticity belonging to them. Among these were widowed wives, bereaved mothers, and men whose utmost strength had been exerted in vain to save their partners and their little ones from the deadly grasp of Rome's vulture bands ; and who had themselves escaped, they knew not how, or why, save that it pleased the Lord they should yet a while remain to glorify Him in the fires. There was youth too, blooming and bright when the last summer's flowers had bloomed ; but now scarcely less a blighted wreck, as to outward things, than were the confused and undistinguishable remains of those fair flowers beneath their

feet. Tender childhood had rarely survived the sweep of massacre, the toils and terrors of the flight, and the pinching hunger that wasted their half-clad bodies in those desolate hiding-places ; and few there were of these : but infants had been born, even in the dens and caves to which kindred love had contrived to bear the mother ; who now hushed in her sunken bosom the feeble cry that might perchance arrest the attention of some wandering foe. Sorrow, deep sorrow, was graven on every countenance ; for they mourned the vineyard of the Lord, trampled down and destroyed ; they mourned the gallant, faithful countrymen and fellow-citizens, who, though not partakers in the like precious faith with themselves, had refused to purchase security at the price of their lives, and had fallen in the common defence. They mourned the beloved Raymond Roger, of whom they knew no more than that he was counted as dead, and his lands and honours grasped by de Montfort, who now sought them also that he might put them to a cruel death ; and they mourned over Simon himself, and his partners in crime, who were treasuring up for themselves a harvest of eternal wrath. Imperfectly as the Albigenses were acquainted with those scriptures which we possess in full, and can search throughout, they had not all the encouragement that we, in their circumstances, should have for "rejoicing in tribulation ;" but they knew in whom they believed ; and most assured they were that He was able, yea, had promised, to keep that which they committed unto Him, to the great day. Their faith, too, had received a fearfully strong confirmation, by be-

holding the awful crimes perpetrated in the name, and for the furtherance of that system which they had rejected as unscriptural and unholy : and as now they gradually assembled, beneath the arch of a somewhat larger cavern than the rest about it, where the cold drip from the roof sent a frequent shiver through their emaciated limbs, they freely strengthened each other in their God, even on the very ground of their terrible sufferings in the cause of a denounced and persecuted faith.

But within this natural excavation was another, formed by human hands. A grave was dug, in the further and drier part, and the soil heaped up beside it. One who had suffered the loss of all things for Christ, who had seen his wife dragged away from his side, while he lay wounded and helpless, a fugitive from Carcassonne, and forced back to the city to swell the company of martyrs there ; while, one by one, his tender little ones perished on the way, had now himself been called to enter into rest ; and with that tenderness towards the mortal remains of a believer which well becomes those who rightly understand the doctrine of the resurrection, his surviving brethren had resolved to bury him in a secure place. For it was a common practice on the part of the warriors of the church to rend from their silent resting-places such as had been branded when alive with the stigma of heresy ; and to expose their decaying remains to every species of savage indignity. It therefore became an interesting duty, and one of no trifling importance in the sight of the poor flock, to ensure for their departed brethren an undisturbed grave.

There was no funeral procession formed in that secluded valley : a few months ago, and the body ~~new~~ about to be stealthily interred would have been borne to the tomb with many simple honours by the open-hearted citizens of Carcassonne ; for he was known and respected, and had moved in a rank above the majority of those openly professing the same faith. But here it was different : the assembled group looked anxiously forth from their hiding-place, and when they saw a stout man, habited as a labouring peasant, approaching with a common sack, heavily filled, upon his shoulders, they drew back, and hung their heads, and wept. Few things could more touchingly realize their outcast, branded state, than this sad contrast to what had been, when in solemn array they were wont to chaunt their funeral hymns beside the bier of a departed brother.

Gently, most gently, was the sack lowered from its panting bearer to the ground ; and reverently did many hands assist to stretch the dead man's doubled limbs upon its outspread surface ; and to smooth his ruffled hair, and restore as much as they could of outward composure to the body whose immortal spirit was resting and rejoicing before the throne of the Lamb. This done, in the dim twilight of the cavern they formed a circle round the corpse, and commenced their whispered discourse, one well versed in scripture, quoting the words, " If in this life only we had hope of Christ, we were of all men most miserable : " a touching appeal to the recent experience of each individual present, every one of whom had undergone such extremities of misery, in one form or another, that the retrospection would :

scarcely have been endurable but for the sweet assurance that all had been encountered for Christ's sake ; and that having suffered, they should also reign with him.

‘Ay,’ said a woman, whose household had been slaughtered in the cathedral of Beziers, ‘but we have a better and a brighter hope than this world of sorrow holds forth to us. Here we must bear the cross : there, we shall wear the crown.’

Another remarked, ‘The Lord Jesus was buried in a cave, and a great stone was rolled to the mouth of the tomb, which a mighty angel moved away that the Saviour might arise : our dear brother also will have a cave for his resting-place ; but it will need no angel to open his grave, for at the first sound of the voice that awakens the dead, he will start, and arise, and, like Lazarus, come forth to meet the Lord.’

A murmur of gladness ran through the little band, as one and another repeated, ‘We shall all be there :—we, and those who are gone before, and those whom we leave behind. There will be no more sorrow, nor crying : no fierce warriors, thirsting for blood,—no unholy priests to profane the Name of the Lord, as though he had come to destroy and not to save his believing people. There we shall look back on all our sufferings, and rejoice exceedingly that we were made worthy to endure them for His dear sake. Oh that they who hate us, and pursue us unto death, might have their eyes enlightened and their hearts turned ! Oh that the blood of the innocent which cleaves to their hands and to their souls, might be washed away by the blood shed

upon the cross.' And the prayer increased in fervency, as, kneeling round the corpse, they contrasted the happy lot of the believer with the dreadful doom that awaits the persecutor : the wrath of God revealed from heaven against the unrighteous and cruel man.

While thus they pleaded, and gave thanks to God for his rich mercy to themselves, until the very gate of heaven seemed opened to their view, and the realizing eye of faith rested on glories invisible to mortal ken, a shadow darkened the mouth of the cavern, but no one entered. It might have been the overshadowing of a darker cloud, coming over the mountain's brow, but its movement, now advancing, now retreating, and then suddenly withdrawn altogether, proved it to be somewhat else. ' We are traced, or betrayed,' whispered one of the party, when the prayer was concluded, but no farther notice was taken ; and after a while they proceeded to the work for which they were assembled, gently drawing the lifeless body towards its shallow grave, when, suddenly, the heavy tramp of many feet was heard, and the too well-known clang of armour resounded among the echoes, and voices stern and high commanded them to come forth from their hiding-place, and surrender their arms to the powers of de Montfort, and the authority of the Church.

' We are not armed,' was the quiet reply : ' we are met here to worship the Lord our Saviour, and to bury our dead.'

' Armed, or unarmed, accursed heretics ; come forth !'

' Nay, brethren, wherefore should you shed innocent blood ? We fear not, nor refuse to die, in the cause of

our most holy faith ; but we would not that you brought this heavy condemnation on yourselves, by slaying the helpless and the unoffending. We are few in number ; we are stripped of all things ; and what with sorrow, and toil, and cold, and hunger, the brief span of our lives will soon be cut short, without involving you in deeper guilt. Leave us alone : we were praying for you, and would fain see some token that our prayers are accepted.'

A burst of laughter followed this appeal, and several proposed to enter at once, and silence them for ever ; but a young knight, who had joined de Montfort recently, and whose conscience was not yet sufficiently seared by the hot iron of Rome, urged the proffering of terms to the suppliants. 'They are a miserable handful,' said he, 'and their feeble tones prove their bodily exhaustion. Let them abjure their heresy, and swear fidelity to the holy see ; and the Church will gain more than by destroying them.'

'Oh, by all means,' said a veteran crusader, jeeringly : 'give them the opportunity of vaunting their stedfastness in rebellion and apostacy, and so invest them with the dignity of martyrs !'

But the young knight, who commanded the party, advanced to the very entrance of the cavern, and loudly said, 'Unhappy wanderers from the only true fold, will you renounce your deadly heresies, humble yourselves at the footstool of holy Church, submit to the penances that your crimes have incurred, and henceforth serve her, in dutiful submission to the righteous will of our sovereign pontiff, the holy father Innocent, and his pious legate, our lord Arnold Amalric ?'

‘ We will renounce whatever in our faith and practice can be proved contrary to the will of God, revealed to man in the blessed Scriptures : and we will submit to the Church in all particulars wherein it can be shewn that she walks according to the same rule. For this rest, we know what will come upon us. Then welcome death ! welcome glory everlasting in the bosom of our God ! ’

A shout of rage and execration, a rush into the little cavern, and the gleam of many weapons flashing through its gloom, finished the tragedy. The grave, with pious care dug for one believer, was filled up, and concealed by a pile of slaughtered bodies, all of whom fell unresistingly beneath the murderer’s hand. A rivulet of crimson hue trickled slowly from the opening, as the perpetrators of this butchery retreated ; and having shewn itself, a fearful testimony against their souls, it sank into the humid soil, and was hidden till the great and dreadful day when earth shall disclose all her slain ; and terrible then will be the revelation of what apostate Rome hath wrought !

It was by means such as we have described, pursuing, and with crafty perseverance marking out the fugitive prey, that Simon de Montfort carried out the plan of the pontiff, who aimed at no less than the utter destruction of every individual who had imbibed the slightest notion of liberty of conscience ; or learned that there was a standard by which the church, every church, must be tried. He could not have employed a fitter instrument, for de Montfort was naturally most cruel ; and power gained by fair means would have

been a prize of little value in his sight, ambitious as he was. The recital of such a massacre as we have described, would kindle up a light in his gloomy eye; and, affording him a new plea of special merit at the Vatican, it strengthened farther his hold on the fair province that became more emphatically his in proportion as it was laid desolate, and saturated with blood. At present, this man was the sole link connecting the successful past with the anticipated future, for which active preparations were being made throughout Europe, by means as disgraceful to the name of Christianity as could be imagined.

The monks of Citeaux, who most fully merit the distinguishing title of the blood-hounds of the church, had issued in swarms from their cells, or rather from their cloisters and refectories, and had spread themselves in every direction, occupying the pulpits of all nations, and preaching up a new crusade against the Albigenses, as though there were no possible access to heaven but through the blood of these innocent victims. With the eloquence and power of demoniacs these cowed recruiting officers set forth the benefits to be derived, here and hereafter, by bearing a hand in the work of slaughter; and as those whom they addressed were, alas! equally under the power of the god of this world with themselves, their appeal was extensively responded to, and their success prodigious. They never preached in vain: the doctrine was too pleasingly accordant with the worst corruptions of the natural heart, and the prize set before their hearers was too tempting, both in its temporal and spiritual aspect, to admit of opposi-

tion. Under their unprincipled guidance, a band was being organized wherever the Romish see had a footing; and it seemed problematical whether the devoted land of Provence, with all its neighbouring districts where heresy was suspected, would be sufficient for such a host to swallow up. The monks were perfectly content to anticipate such mutual slaughter as should thin the multitude to a number suited to the extent of country: and more than content, if we may judge from their language and proceedings in urging on the terrible conflict.

It is utterly impossible to conceive what could animate these men to such a work, unless we attribute it to direct Satanic influence. They knew the land: they knew it in its days of peace and plenty, of security, and elegance, and ease. They knew that the victims there, for whose blood they were athirst, were alike free from a turbulent spirit, and from the vices that certainly prevailed among the voluptuous lords under whose sway they lived unmolested; and that even in their religious observances they shunned all ostentatious display of their dissent from Romish practices, and worshipped unobtrusively, according to their conscience. It is a terrible spectacle of human depravity, this mission of the preachers from Citeaux. In all ages we find him that is born after the flesh persecuting him that is born after the spirit; and a Cain always hating an Abel because his own works are evil: and his brother's righteous, but this was more; this was a flood poured out from the dragon's own mouth, to overwhelm and destroy the only true Church of God.

Too successful were the efforts of the monks of Citeaux. They speedily gathered together a fresh band of maddened enthusiasts, whom they had induced so implicitly to believe their audacious assertions, that probably not one among them entertained a doubt of being at once made clean from all his past offences, and licensed to a new life of unblushing iniquity, with the positive certainty of gaining heaven at last, at the easy price of marching for forty days through a country already conquered and desolated, and putting to death a few poor straggling fugitives, to be dragged from their places of concealment. Such was the aspect of the war in which the second crusading army engaged ; for it was not until they were on their way to join his standard that any thing like a reverse seemed to menace de Montfort : nor was the discouragement occasioned by a momentary check sufficient to damp the ardour of that fearless fanatic. Either through policy or some personal goodwill, the Pope had listened with favour to Raymond of Toulouse, when pleading his own cause in the Vatican ; and it cost the legate no small trouble, eagerly as his efforts were seconded by the fierce bishop Foulquet, to render nugatory the advantages supposed to be gained by that unhappy nobleman. Meanwhile the king of Arragon had broken off all negotiation with de Montfort, declaring his hostile feelings so plainly as to infuse new courage into the surrounding lords of the conquered provinces. They combined in a general revolt, and proved so successful in repelling the usurper that, at the end of a few months, the two hundred cities and fortified places in the hands of Simon were reduced to eight.

Most welcome, therefore, was the succour supplied by the efforts of the preaching monks of Citeaux ; and most appropriately was it headed : for these troops, enlisted for the express purpose of wholesale, indiscriminate massacre, by the exhortations of priests, were led to the scene of their cruel exploits by a woman. Alice de Montmorency, the wife of de Montfort, headed the fresh host whose approach gladdened the heart of her husband : and thus was the frightful anomaly completed.

And now was the flood indeed poured forth on that devoted land ; now, indeed, war, in its fiercest, fellest aspect, raged against the saints of God, and against all who conspired to shelter them, and all who hesitated to drag them forth to slaughter. Again must we repeat that the details are those, and those alone, left on record by the companions, the eulogists of the aggressors ; and therefore only are they credible : not so much from the trustworthy character of the witnesses, as because the exulting tone of joy and thankfulness in which they are narrated, exhibits a spirit of murderous bigotry sufficient to account for the perpetration of what it were else incredible that man should have committed against his peaceful, unoffending brother man.

De Montfort cast his mental eye over the wide territory ; and being well informed as to the number, position and strength of the fortresses which he had to reconquer, and those still remaining to be reduced, he placed himself at the head of his impatient levies, and commenced the fierce campaign. One after another he attacked the castles on his route, and having, by the im-

petuosity of the assault, the terror that his name inspired, and the mysterious permission of Him who thus for a time delivered over his poor flock into the hands of the merciless, carried the place, he dragged forth the remaining inhabitants, hanged them on gibbets in the most conspicuous spots, dismantled or burned the fortress, unless it was sufficiently important to justify his leaving a garrison there, and marched on to the next post. In this way he scoured the country with wonderful rapidity ; and when, trusting in their righteous cause, or rendered confident by the strength of their bulwarks, the defenders of any place protracted their resistance, he revenged himself for the temporary delay by the most horrible cruelties. Thus, Brom, having a very strong castle, occupied him three days in reducing it ; and no sooner had he captured it than he selected upwards of an hundred of the inhabitants, whose eyes, with ferocious barbarity, he tore out, cut off their noses, and having left a single individual with one eye uninjured, he commanded him to use his sight to guide the wretched company of bleeding sufferers to the next fortress, Cabaret, so to apprize its garrison of what they must expect if they dared to oppose his progress. Death by strangulation on the gallows, or by a blazing pile, was surely preferable to tortures such as these, with the prospect of miserably perishing in lingering helplessness : and thus the Church's champion calculated on immolating her victims at a less expense of time and trouble and possible loss of life to his own host. The castle of Alaric, however, proved a great hindrance, and a severe disappointment too : it held out for eleven

days, defying his utmost efforts ; and when at length the place was carried, and imagination already revelled in the blood of the audacious defenders, they were found to have made good a retreat that placed them beyond his grasp. Only a small remnant remained for de Montfort to massacre. Beyond this, he passed unobstructed for many leagues : not a castle but had been deserted, leaving little more than empty walls to reward the plunderers' search. Still the poor blood-stained country smiled in the beauty of its rich fertility : vineyards mantled the hills, and the precious olive bore its wonted freight : in the absence of human victims, here was a field for wanton devastation ; and the soldiers of the cross were dispersed on all sides, rending up by the roots those beauteous vines, and hewing down with their gory weapons the ancient olives, that promised to supply many a succeeding generation. This was acceptable work to the master whom they and their leader alike served ; the Spirit who evermore works in the children of disobedience, prompting rebellion wheresoever God has given a command. We find a gracious and merciful prohibition recorded in scripture, " When thou shalt besiege a city a long time, in making war against it to take it, thou shalt not destroy the trees thereof by forcing an axe against them ; for thou mayest eat of them, and thou shalt not cut them down (for the tree of the field is man's life) to employ them in the siege : only the trees which thou knowest that they be not trees for meat, thou shalt destroy and cut them down." Deut. xx. 19, 20.

Here we have the case of a people actually sent forth

by the Lord to execute His judgments on the idolatrous and cruel heathens, requiring wood for the necessary operations of a siege, yet strictly prohibited from supplying their need by the destruction of a single fruit-tree, even in an enemy's country, because "the tree of the field is man's life:" how dreadful, then, is the spectacle of a body of men professing the religion of the Bible, employed in destroying the whole rich produce of a country, not to aid their hostile operations, not to supply their own present necessities, but simply and avowedly for the very reason assigned by the Most High against such an act, because "the tree of the field *is* man's life," and some famishing wanderers might find the table spread by God's hand in the wilderness to support the life which He gave. Such deeds have been done even in our day, and by men nominally protesting against the crimes of Rome: but it is an awful thing thus to make light of what the Lord our God hath commanded; and the Evil One who exulted in every step of de Montfort's terrible career, is the leader in all such enterprises of cruelty and wrong.

We now arrive at a point in the narrative on which the monk Peter has dwelt with more enthusiastic delight, than even on what he calls the 'miracle' that delivered up the innocent victims of Beziers to the knife. Near Narbonne, perched on a lofty rock, and surrounded on all sides by such precipices as rendered it seemingly inaccessible, stood the magnificent castle of Minerva, or Menerbe, famed no less for its natural strength than for the courage and fidelity of its lord, Giraud, one of the bravest and most loyal knights owing fealty to the

viscount of Carcassonne. To Raymond Roger he had been ardently attached ; and now that the grave had closed over that champion of the oppressed, Giraud indignantly rejected the assumed authority of his murderer, and held the castle as a duteous vassal of Raymond Trencavel, the infant son of the viscount, and lawful inheritor of his possessions. The faith of the gospel was, perhaps, more extensively and openly professed here than in any place that de Montfort had yet assailed ; and the prize was, in every point of view, a most tempting one, alike to priest and warrior. The siege was commenced with vigour, and seven weeks of unsuccessful assault had not abated either the fury of the crusaders or the constancy of the garrison ; but that which in one aspect formed their greatest strength, in another proved the worst disadvantage of the besieged. Their rock repelled the enemy ; but it yielded no water-spring to them ; their sole dependence was on cisterns, which at length failed them ; and Giraud under a flag of truce proceeded to the camp to treat on the best terms that he could for capitulation. De Montfort, dreading the diminution of his host, from which at the end of every forty days many withdrew, while he depended solely on the recruiting brothers of Citeaux for adequate supplies in their room, and exceedingly anxious to proceed on his march, granted terms that satisfied Giraud ; and the latter was about to make preparations for surrendering, when the legate, who had been absent during the treaty, suddenly returned to the camp ; and de Montfort, alarmed at his own boldness, no less suddenly announced that nothing agreed upon during the absence

of the legate could be considered binding until ratified by him. We cannot but cite the language of the monk Peter, in describing the trouble of Arnold on being thus appealed to for the approval of conditions comparatively just and rational. 'The abbot was much afflicted. In truth it was his desire that every enemy of Christ should be slain ; but in his character of monk and priest he could not undertake to pronounce their condemnation himself.' Here we see, most clearly, the use to which the Romish Church puts its miserable slaves ; among whom were then numbered most of the kings and mighty men of Christendom. With the full developments of the dragon's character upon it, still as a nominally religious system it is compelled to assume the lamblike aspect that prevents its tearing with its own teeth the prey set apart for destruction. Wonderful and fearful is the craft which, to meet the difficulty, has brought such troops of wolves into perfect subjection ; so that on a signal they obey, (and count it meritorious obedience too) no less their own carnivorous propensities than the will of their masked director !

Arnold Almaric immediately hit on a device for the attainment of his object. Knowing that the agreement entered into between the chiefs was as yet only verbal, he directed them to sit down apart, and each to furnish him with a correct written statement of every item in it. Of course, without a miracle, some discrepancy would appear ; and on this the unprincipled legate founded a pretext for declaring the whole agreement void, seeing that they were not fully of the same mind as to the terms. Giraud, anxious to succour his people,

now suffering from the extremity of thirst, offered to waive his own version, and to accept that of de Montfort ; and this again brought the council of war to a stand. The articles of capitulation, as stated by Simon, were read ; and, here another instance occurred of the deadly spirit animating the breasts of those who assumed the spiritual leadership of men's consciences, as a sure means of commanding their unlimited submission in things temporal ; and of the utter opposition of that spirit to every thing that savours of the gospel of peace. The incident is related by the monk of Vaux-Cernay, with admiring approval of the holy zeal manifested. When that article was read which provided for the safety of any of the Albigenic professors who should renounce their faith, a French nobleman, Robert de Mauvaison, mindful of the terms on which his salvation was guaranteed by the church, exclaimed that the pilgrims would never consent to such a clause ; for they had taken the cross, not to shew mercy to heretics, but to exterminate them. He spoke, no doubt, the real feeling of the whole host ; but one which it might be supposed the ecclesiastical leaders would, for decency's sake, have appeared to disavow. Far from it : the legate Arnold, immediately soothed the indignant knight, not by representing to him the blessedness of bringing wanderers back to the fold ; not by reminding him that our Lord has pronounced, "Blessed are the merciful," but by bidding him not fear ; for he was satisfied that very few of the heretics would be converted ! This tacit approval on Arnold's part of the agreement, together with the comfortable hope which it

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held out of no limit being placed on the work of blood, decided the matter : the articles were signed ; and with a heavy heart the gallant Giraud delivered up his fortress to those who thirsted for the slaughter of its defenders. They entered with great solemnity, preceded by the cross and the banners of de Montfort ; while the whole army, led by the priestly choir who in full canonical pomp formed their vanguard, chanted in grand and overwhelming chorus the magnificent *Te Deum*, every sublime verse of which speaks condemnation to those who could so fearfully misapply the language of believing prayer and praise. Alas for those, the light within whom is darkness ! how great, how awfully great is that darkness !

Meanwhile, the servants of the Lord, who had indeed tasted the redemption afforded by his most precious blood, and who knew that their happy lot was to be numbered with his saints in glory everlasting, abundantly verified the prediction of the cruel legate. Not one among them entertained a thought of renouncing the faith of their Redeemer. Calm and cheerful in the assured hope of meeting again ere night should have closed upon the earth, in that happy place where night never comes, husbands embraced their wives, fathers their daughters, sons their aged mothers, and brothers their blooming sisters, and parted : the males repaired to one large mansion, the females to another ; and thus self-accused of their denounced faith, voluntarily separated from their sympathizing fellow-townsmen, prepared as sheep to the slaughter, they kneeled down confessing their sins to the Most High, pleading the all-

prevailing merits of the Lord Jesus Christ, and, with fervent thanksgiving for having been brought to the saving knowledge of Him who of God was made to them wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption, they besought the grace that alone could keep them steadfast, unmoveable, faithful unto death, and meet for the crown of everlasting life.

And now the heavy tramp, the loud clang of mailed hosts, almost drowned in the thundering hymn of such praise as must be an abomination to the holy and merciful One, whose Name they dared so to blaspheme, bespoke the approach of the dragon's progeny. First of the motley band of assailants, came the Abbot Guy de Vaux-Cernay, still active in the fulfilment of that mission which he undertook in the recesses of the Vatican seventeen years before. He appeared as a preacher of the faith to men who had fallen into 'damnable heresies,' and commenced the formal exhortation which the terms of the capitulation rendered necessary, thundering forth the terrors of the Church's ban on all who dared to dispute her supremacy, and requiring an instant recantation of what the Albigenses held to be, as indeed it was, the doctrine of eternal life. He was not allowed to proceed far in his sermon: a general cry burst from the indignant hearers, who felt that he was speaking blasphemy against the holy Name whereby they were called: 'We will have none of your faith; we have renounced the doctrines of your Roman Church. You labour in vain to move us from the truth which we have embraced, and from which nothing either in life or in death can move us.' Satisfied that no victims

would escape from among these devoted believers, Guy left them, and proceeded to the house where the females were in like manner awaiting their fate ; and here he was even more quickly and resolutely cut short in his discourse : they would not hear him ; they were full of hope and joy, and eager to lay down their lives for the Gospel. While this was going on, de Montfort, fully partaking in the legate's assurance, collected an immense quantity of fire-wood, piling it in the most open space of the town. He then visited in turn the two assemblies, addressing them more briefly than the Abbot had done, in words that could not be understood. He pointed to the heap of dry faggots, on which it was counted a sacred privilege for the noblest of the band to cast an additional stick, and in his usual dark, stern manner, said, ' Be converted to the Catholic faith, or ascend this pile.' Not one among his hearers flinched, or quailed, or gave token of a hesitating thought ; fire was applied to the heap, and a mighty conflagration blazed up to heaven. Then might be seen the eager rush of armed men, each hoping to seize some helpless victim, and to propitiate God, yea even our own God, by casting the struggling form of decrepit age, or blooming youth, or terrified childhood into the burning gulph—but most of them were disappointed in the hope ; for with light step all who could do so glided by, and cast themselves into the fire as into a glorious chariot provided to bear them to their bright and blessed home. With loud voices they commended their souls to Him for whom they counted it all joy to suffer this terrible martyrdom ; and thus did a hundred and forty human

bodies perish from the sight of man, in a single pile of fire, kindled from the materials of their own peaceful homes. Yet three were left of the women : while on their way to the fire, a noble lady, mother of the lord of Montmorenci, had them forcibly arrested, and held as lookers-on upon a scene, the horrors of which were sufficient to deprive them of reason ; while a forced or an unconscious assent to what was demanded, enrolled them in the list of apostates, from which, and not from the book of life, we must fervently hope that their names were subsequently blotted out : for those were days when the word of our Lord was fulfilled to the uttermost extent of its awful import ; “ He that findeth his life shall lose it ; and he that loseth his life for my sake shall find it.”

Such was the termination of the seven weeks’ siege, which had doubtless been protracted to ripen many souls for glory. The smouldering fires died away, and the undistinguishable ashes of what had but an hour before been vigorous with life, and bright in beauty, were borne on the winds of heaven to be seen no more. The spirits, set free from mortal fetters, went to the presence of their redeeming God, there to meet and to rejoice with the multitude who had, like themselves, come out of great tribulation, with robes washed white, not in their own innocency, but in the blood of the Lamb ; with them to anticipate the day of reunion with their purified bodies, changed by the power of elemental fire into imperceptible dust : again to be changed into the likeness of Christ’s glorious body, according to that mighty working, whereby He is able to subdue

even all things unto himself. We lament now their past sufferings ; we rejoice in their present happiness ; ere long we shall see them, a magnificent army of glorified saints, descending with their Lord to experience the literal fulfilment of a too-much neglected promise, " The meek shall *inherit the earth.*"

The angels of God having borne his slaughtered ones to His bosom, the spirits of darkness brooded still over their wretched prey, who watched with horrible satisfaction the crumbling away of each human cinder into dust, and raised again the mocking hymn of praise, and looked forward to the morrow's march that should conduct them to new victims. And is this, again we ask with solemn earnestness, as in the presence of God, Is this Christianity ? We know no one, scarcely even among the adherents of Rome in our day, who would dare to answer—Yes. They disown such deeds, as forming any part of their religious system, attributing them solely to the spirit of the barbarous age in which they were perpetrated ; yet examine a little farther, and it will be found that, of this, the middle ages as it is called, not only Romanists, but some who believe themselves to be Protestants, habitually speak as of the most glorious era of the Church ! There is a net of deadly texture fast closing around us, and it behoves us narrowly to examine the subtle meshes as they come to view. The crusades were a legitimate carrying out, by a party then powerful enough to do its bidding, of the unchanged principles, the consistent doctrines, and of the now existing laws of the papacy. As we proceed, this may become more apparent ; but it is a fact, the

overlooking of which is at this moment hurrying on a crisis that man cannot, perhaps, avert ; but for which the Church of Christ must be prepared, by arming themselves with the like mind as their suffering Master ; and as their brethren who of old were slain, as many more will be.

CHAPTER FIFTH.



THE LADY OF LAVAUUR.





CHAPTER V.

THE LADY OF LAVAUR.

THE unsparing cruelty of the crusaders, their barbarous massacre, by the most painful and ignominious deaths, of such as were compelled to surrender to them; and the tortures that sometimes, as in the case of the inhabitants of

Brom, the victims were left to linger under, all combined, with the consciousness of a just and holy cause, to nerve the hands of those who held the strong castle of Termes, a powerful frontier fortress on the borders of Roussillon. This was the next point of attack in the order of march laid down for the great locust army, whose glory it was to turn the comparative Eden of a most lovely and smiling country into a waste howling wilderness, defiled by blood, and deformed by every species of savage outrage.

Raymond of Termes was a warrior no less brave than Giraud of Minerve; and, warned by the fate of that noble, he proved more inflexible, rejecting every proposal for capitulation, even when the periodical diminution of Simon's army rendered him desirous of obtaining possession on terms really favourable to the besieged. The latter had witnessed too many recent instances of the measure of faith that Rome keeps with those whom she calls heretics, to believe that any thing better than a snare could lurk beneath the fairest proffers of her emissaries. Termes, therefore, held out for four months, baffling every device, repulsing every attack, and rejecting every offer of the enemy. During this period the army underwent the usual mutations; large bodies of men, who had already satiated their cruelty and rapine on Minerve, dispersed from before the walls of Termes, on the expiration of their forty days, to lay upon the idol-shrines of their false worship the blood-stained trophies won in this unholy war. Their places were supplied by others, from the still unexhausted masses of fanaticism in France, from Ger-

many, from England, and many other places where the preaching friars were displaying new zeal, as the success of de Montfort inflated their pride, and raised their hope of ultimately and effectually extinguishing the light of the gospel. Of these new levies, not a few fulfilled their stipulated term of service before the walls, and left them still unbroken ; but from every new reinforcement de Montfort swelled his band of permanent followers ; men who, from innate love of slaughter, or from greediness to share the spoils of a final conquest, were willing to march under his standard to the end of the war. A war waged by Satan himself against the Lord's heritage ; but which de Montfort now so perseveringly prosecuted from motives of worldly ambition.

Still Termes held out : the cisterns, their only resource, had been filled by the rains, while the heat of summer operated prejudicially on the soft water so collected. Nevertheless, the tainted beverage was eagerly drank ; and again, before the winter cold set in were the reservoirs in like manner replenished. It proved, however, the occasion of such severe and fatal disease among the garrison, that while their numbers daily decreased, the physical strength, and with it, no doubt, the mental energy, of the survivors rapidly failed. A longer defence was considered hopeless ; but the idea of yielding themselves to the pitiless conquerors was not to be tolerated. Their resolve was taken ; preparations were cautiously and noiselessly made ; and in the dead of a November's night, the exhausted company silently abandoned their stout bulwarks, passed unobserved

the first line of entrenchment, and hastily separated, seeking the mountain-passes into Catalonia. But such a movement could not long remain undiscovered : their flight was made known in the camp, and instantly the crusaders rushed to arms. With mutual exhortation they cheered each other on to the pursuit : that enemies who, in addition to their crimes against the Romish church, had already cost them so much personal toil and loss of time, should escape with their lives, would be a stigma at once on their fidelity to the faith and on their military prowess. The army was quickly pressing on the footsteps of the disheartened fugitives, the greater number of whom they overtook ; and at once, men, women, and children were heaped in an indiscriminate pile of slaughter, wheresoever the murderous weapon could reach them. Raymond, the lord of Termes, was captured alive, with some others, whom they wished de Montfort to have the glory and the high merit of burning, and otherwise torturing to death. They had their desire with regard to the inferior class ; but Raymond's sin had been too grievous to be so speedily expiated. The merciless Simon refused him the death that he would have hailed as a boon, and remembering a deep dark dungeon under a tower in Carcassonne, he conveyed him thither, to endure years of hopeless captivity in its most cruel form. Of him we know no more than that he suffered for defending those who knew and loved the truth ; and if that truth had also made him spiritually free, his dungeon was a place of liberty and light ; for Christ was there. At this distance of time, and with nought to guide us save such books as their

murderous enemies have written, we cannot form a correct judgment of individual cases like this : but there is ground for many a cheering hope concerning thousands of victims who were not called to a voluntary martyrdom like those of Minerve ; a hope which the great day of revelation may abundantly confirm. Then, face to face, they must meet, the slayers and the slain ; and He who was present, marking all, discerning every thought of every heart, and tracing every action to its most secret spring, will award a judgment, the tremendous issues of which the heart of man may well tremble to contemplate.

War in its most dreadful form had now raged against the Albigenes for more than a year and a half. It was in the Spring of 1209 that the first army marched upon the territories of Raymond Roger ; and Termes fell in November 1210. Farther resistance seemed to be abandoned by the wretched inhabitants of neighbouring towns and castles : no sign of opposition was seen ; but on every side helpless fugitives were vainly seeking to escape the hands of the triumphant enemy, to whom it was mere sport to pursue them, singly or in groupes, and to put them to death on the spot, or else to drag them to the camp, to refresh their spirits, and reanimate the zeal of the assembled host, by the spectacle of a slow burning. All seemed to augur immediate and utter destruction to the provinces ; even the king of Arragon, attached as he had long been to the cause, and nearly allied both to the Count of Toulouse and to Raymond Roger, was beguiled by the plausibility of de Montfort, and to a great extent, placed himself in his

hands. Simon, however, was too much inflated by pride, and too conscious of the immense power that he wielded in the daily augmenting host of fierce crusaders who poured in on every side, to use his advantage prudently. He treated the king of Arragon and the Count of Toulouse with the same overbearing insolence : proclaimed them alike rebels against the supreme power of Rome, and even attempted to place them under arrest in the city of Arles, whither they had been invited to negotiate with the lordly legate and the usurping chief. This of course, renewed the spirit of indignant opposition in the bosoms of the insulted parties ; but de Montfort cared little for any shew of future resistance : the preaching firebrands of Citeaux sent him in new levies ; and in all the pride of assured success he marched, in the following spring, on Cabaret, where a stout defence was anticipated ; instead of which the citadel, hitherto impregnable by hostile power, was thrown open to him, and formed the first of a series of unresisted triumphs, along the line of mountainous fortresses that frowned upon the rugged passes connecting the province of Carcassonne with that of Toulouse. Here, the wily commander, feeling the value of such rapid advances upon a more important scene of action, restrained the barbarity of his followers, and exhibited a shew of leniency to those who submitted, well calculated to encourage the practice of unconditional surrender. It would be easy, when the mighty strong-holds of truth were subdued, and no refuge left for the scattered few, to return and execute vengeance on all who should retain even a semblance of religious liberty.

Thus, without hindrance and without loss, the dark unbroken masses of armed destroyers approached the populous city of Toulouse, the favoured refuge of God's people ; the garden where no hand, human or infernal, had yet succeeded in eradicating the growth of plants watered from above, and yielding the increase that God alone could give. It was still some leagues distant, and braving their advance stood the solitary but massive castle of Lavaur. This was known to be in the possession of a woman, a widow, whose timidity no doubt the crusaders expected speedily to overawe ; but the lady Guiraudé was an openly professing follower of the truth as it is in Jesus ; a bold separatist from the authority and from the errors of Rome : and she had made her stout castle a place of refuge and security to as many of her fellow-believers as it would contain. She had also with her a brother, both in the flesh and in the faith, a brave knight named Aimery de Montreal, whose possessions had been seized by de Montfort, while he, with eighty other faithful knights, happily escaped, and now assisted to man the walls of Lavaur. In all the province, excepting its capital city, there was not a place more confided in by the persecuted flock than this castle. Immensely strong, perfectly fortified on all sides, stored with abundance of provisions, ammunition, and whatsoever could contribute to its defence, while a people who openly worshipped God in spirit and in truth kept watch and ward within, it was a point of most thrilling interest to the flock around : of most sanguinary eagerness on the part of the wolves that invaded them. The very fact of its being the heri-

tage of a widow who served God, inspired confidence in the bosoms of those who trusted in Him. But His way is sometimes in the sea, and his path in the deep waters, and his footsteps are not known.

Toulouse being so near, and Count Raymond again in open excommunication, and therefore naturally looked to as preparing to defend himself and his subjects from the aggressor, application was made to him for further supplies by the garrison of Lavaur ; but the wretched man ventured not to afford them. At the same time the infamous bishop of the place, Fouquet, assembled the members of his own communion, and in a fiery harangue represented to them the vengeance they were bringing down on themselves by continuing so far undistinguished from the heretics of the place. He ceased not until he had enrolled a company of five thousand citizens of Toulouse, and marched them off as a re-inforcement to swell the enormous army already engaged in besieging Lavaur. This is one of the most fearful instances of that positive thirst for human blood, for the blood of compatriots, of neighbours and kinsmen, which forms the most glaring feature of Popery during which was its age of triumphant, uncontrouled dominion, and unrestrained development of its actual character. That five thousand men should be found within the walls of a city to volunteer their needless aid in slaughtering their very brethren, around whom a host countless for multitude, and terrible in destructive might were swarming, and all for the meritorious piety of the deed, and the heavenly reward to be reaped for it, invests this mystery of iniquity with a hideousness

that humanity can scarcely bear to look on. And this was done in the name of Jesus ! This was done, with loud invocations of the Holy Spirit ! Truly She who could bring such things to pass, enlisting in the work men of every country, had made all nations drunk with the wine of the wrath of her fornication ; truly was she, and is she, the Mother of abominations : and woe to those who are partakers of her sins, and shall receive of her plagues.

The siege of Lavaur proved a more arduous work than the assailants had anticipated ; and its progress was also rendered remarkable by events that then occurred. Raymond VI., the miserable slave of cowardly superstition, was not ashamed again to appear as a suppliant for favour at the hands of the two tyrants, Simon and Arnold ; but all his concessions proved vain. Contempt, insult, and the avowal of a determination to take possession of his wide and valuable dominions, so soon as their present enterprize should have terminated, were all that he met in return for his advances : until the mere instinct of self-preservation wrought on him to do what he ought long before to have decided on upon far nobler grounds. He ceased to wear the semblance of that abject submission which had rendered him so wretchedly contemptible alike to friend and foe ; and applying as chief of Toulouse to the independent lords of the surrounding provinces, of Comminges, Foix, Bearn, Aquitaine, with others who were involved in the charge of sheltering the Albigensic believers, he formed a strong alliance with them. The first overt act of rebellion upon which he ventured consisted in an open

prohibition, addressed to his own subjects, against furnishing supplies to the besiegers' camp : and, thus committed, he shewed signs of returning resolution that cheered many a drooping heart among the people whom he had been heretofore so ready to sell to destruction at the price of a little personal favour from the Court of Rome.

It may be doubted whether de Montfort felt any concern at this proceeding, which furnished him with an additional pretext for shedding man's blood : and the knowledge that six thousand fresh troops were even then on the march from Germany to aid his arms, and expected shortly to arrive before Lavaur, increased his confidence. These troops however, arrived not : between the Tarn and the Garonne their steps were arrested by an ambuscade of chosen men, commanded by the gallant Count of Foix ; and they fell in one wide mass of slaughter beneath the arms of those whom they come to invade, to despoil, and to massacre. This event, combined with serious distress for provisions, arising from Count Raymond's prohibition, exasperated de Montfort and led him to renewed efforts for the accomplishment of what he had in hand. Machines, long in use among Eastern nations, but as yet unknown to the peaceful dwellers of those European vallies, were brought to aid his operations. Simon had no difficulty in directing their formation, well practised as he was in the work of destruction as a veteran crusader in the Holy Land, and surrounded by knights and soldiers who had served there. Indeed the original crusades were now nearly abandoned for the lighter service of a slaughtering ex-

pedition of forty days to so comparatively short a distance from home : the same recompence being guaranteed as for the distant, hazardous exploit of a campaign in Palestine : that is to say, pardon of sin, peace of conscience, justification before God, and eternal life !

The machine with which these modern Romans made the most fatal impression on the walls of Lavour was not much dissimilar from those used by their pagan predecessors against the ancient city of our God. A great wooden tower having been constructed in the camp, and cased in raw hides to protect it from the action of fire, it was advanced to the foot of the fortress ; and on opening it, perpendicularly a huge iron beam was projected by the united strength of many men, the extremity of which was furnished with great iron claws, resembling those of a tiger or a cat, (from the latter animal it took its name,) and these being applied with all possible force to the wall, the stones were seized, separated, torn out, and in most cases a breach soon effected. In the present instance, however, when de Montfort had completed his "cat," and brought it, under a formidable escort of armed men, to the walls of the Protestant fortress, the width of the ancient ditches was found so great as to baffle all his skill, defying the approach of those tremendous iron claws. To obviate this, he employed all his army in labouring to fill up the moat : they cast in daily prodigious masses of earth, stones, and whatever might raise the level of the excavation : but every night the defenders quietly issued from their subterranean passages, clearing before day-break the accumulated rubbish. This siege greatly re-

sembled in some points that of Jerusalem in the days of Titus ; and de Montfort seemed to take a lesson from the records of that war ; for he had recourse to the expedient of filling these communications with smoke and flame, during the intervals of the work ; thus driving back the besieged, and leaving his own unhallowed labours unimpaired. By such means he filled the ditches, formed a secure footing for his infernal machine, and tore away enough of the bulwarks to effect a practicable breach.

The prey was now within their grasp ; the pious widow, and her injured brother, and all to whom her castle had been a refuge were at their mercy. Such mercy ! Arnold Amalric, it appears, was absent ; for the bishop of Courdien officiated as his representative : and assuredly the legate would not willingly have been away from such a feast of death. This man, with all his fellow bishops, priests, and every ecclesiastic in the host, arrayed in the gorgeous finery of their pontifical habits, formed a grand procession, shouting forth, as the knights mounted the breach, the famous hymn that, despite its high intrinsic piety and poetry, their horrible prostitution has almost rendered hateful to Christian ears : *Veni Creator Spiritus*. Simon de Montfort meanwhile earnestly entreated the furious assailants to restrain their present vengeance and to take all alive, *that the priests of the living God might not be deprived of their promised joys*. He was obeyed : Aimery was first dragged forth, with his faithful companions in arms ; and de Montfort directed them to be forthwith hanged upon a gallows already erected for that purpose,

but which, not being well fixed, gave way with the weight of Count Aimery ; and to avoid the delay of repairing it he commanded the other eighty to be butchered at once on the spot, an order received and obeyed with no little avidity by the soldiers of the Church. The lady Guiraude was then brought, and received her sentence, to be cast into a pit, or well, which was found in the place, and to be buried under a heap of stones. The inhabitants of the Castle were then collected ; and, says Peter de Vaux-Cernay, " the pilgrims burned them alive with inexpressible joy."

Now, as it is so much the practice in our day, among learned scribes and reverend divines of a particular school, not only to 'speak gently of our sister's fall,' meaning Babylon the Great, but in an especial manner, and for very special ends, to gloss over and to eulogize the doings of the Romish power, at the period of which we treat, blackening without mercy the characters of God's persecuted flock, and accusing all who present a fair and ungarbled statement of facts, of falsification and misquotation, we shall just place before our readers the expressions used by the monk Peter, already so often cited, and which we copy, *verbatim et literatim*, from a copy of his famous book in our own possession, bearing title, 'Historia Albigensium, et sacri belli in eos, Anno M.C.C.IX. duce et principe Simone á Monteforti, dein Tolosano comite, rebus strenue gestis clarissimo. Auctore PETRO, cœnobij Vallis Sarnensis ord. Cisterciensis in Parisiensi diœcesi monacho, cruceatæ huius militiæ teste oculato.' It bears date, 'Trecis,' 1615.

In the 52nd chapter, the monkish eye-witness, who went as the especial scribe and eulogist of Guy the abbot of his order, thus writes. ‘Mox eductus est de castro Aimericus de quo supra tetigimus que fuerat dominus montis regalis & alii milites usque ad octoginta nobilis autē Comes proposuit, quod omnes patibulo suspēderētur, sed cum Aimericus qui erat maior inter illos suspensus fuisset, cadentibus furcis, quæ præ nimia festum bene non fuerant terræ affixæ, natione videns comes quod mora magna fieret, alios occidi præcipit, quos peregrini audissime suscipientes occiderunt citius in eodem loco. Dominam etiam castri quæ erat Aimerici & hæretica pessima, in puteum projectam, comes lapidibus obtui fecit innumerabiles etiam hæreticos, peregrini nostri *cum ingenti gaudio* combusserunt.’

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The revolting expression, which we have given in the language of the original work, descriptive of the joyous feelings that animated the so-called Christian host, while gazing on the tortures of their fellow-creatures, writhing in those burning flames, is not of solitary occurrence in the narrative of the Monk Peter ; who, being present on these occasions, and writing under the direction of his patronizing Abbot, Guy, may be held as carefully describing the butcheries that he records, just as it was considered desirable that the world should view them. He uses the same, or exactly similar epithets on many other occasions, declaring that the pilgrims burned the ‘heretics’ with great joy :—with the utmost joy :—with unspeakable joy : only varying the phrases with-

out altering the sense of the words ; and perhaps representing occasionally a higher degree of delight, as the number of victims was greater, or their constant devotion to the faith which they held more conspicuous than usual. It is impossible to read the words without being struck by the fearful accuracy of the inspired description of papal Rome,—a shameless woman, DRUNKEN with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus. What but the madness of intoxication could produce so fiendish a joy ? What but the frantic mirth of drunkenness give vent to such a laugh, such a shout of wild exultation as responded to the dying groan of the strong man, the shriek of the tender woman, and the shrill, piercing cry of the agonized babe, as each coiled up and shrivelled amid the blazing fires—or, more appalling still, that yell of satanic delight, drowning the voice of prayer and praise that in many, very many instances issued from lips that could utter no groan, no cry, on the very threshold of heaven, with all its unutterable glories opening to their view ! Many saw beyond the flames and smoke, obscuring as they did the material firmament, that vision which burst on Stephen amid the shower of stones : and the intercessory prayer of the proto-martyr for his murderers burst from many a tongue, parching in the cruel fires, that were to be succeeded by the cool, refreshing drops of the river that proceeds from the throne of God and of the Lamb. Nowhere shall we behold a more striking display of the Church of Christ in the midst of the synagogue of Satan ; of the Bride, the Lamb's wife, persecuted unto death by the great harlot who had

dared to usurp her name and place, than by the side of a pile where the bodies of the Albigenses crumbled into ashes, while the followers of Rome stood round, and in the fierce excitement of spiritual drunkenness, mocked their dying pangs.

The reduction of Lafaure was a very important event: it must be borne in mind that the enormous host who followed de Montfort were neither accompanied by a provisioning department, nor did they receive pay in any other shape than that most intangible coin wherein Great Babylon carries on her traffic in the souls of men. In this peculiar branch of her commerce, she receives from them what God has, in an especial manner, laid claim to; they serve her with all the heart, all the mind, all the soul, and all the strength; a service including the whole man, not only in his affections, intellectual capacities, and spiritual devotedness, but also with the muscular powers of the bodily frame, set apart to do her bidding, and rendered wholly subservient to her will. In return for this substantial tribute, she gives her own verbal security for all that the Lord God alone can dispense to His creatures: she guarantees an oblivion of sin, a blotting out of the record that is against the sinner, not with the blood of Christ, but by means of some mysterious agent of her own invention and substitution; she shews a key, which she avers to be that of paradise, and passes her promise to admit by its power the soul of her wretched customer to everlasting communion with God and with His saints. What more can they require? the very service demanded of them in this instance was the invasion of a peculiarly rich

and fruitful country, and the slaughter of its inhabitants, by which their possessions would, of course, fall into the hands of the victorious survivors ; and no marvel that a thought of military pay or magazines never entered the head of either party in this transaction. Two objects alone occupied the mind of the crusader : slaughter first ; because that was the stipulated price of his soul's salvation ; and next plunder, without which his bodily wants could not be supplied. The whole system is one of fearful sublimity in the wicked wisdom that cometh from beneath : it caused an Apostle who had witnessed the mightiest miracles that attested the truth of Christianity, and who himself was largely gifted with a miracle-working power, to wonder with great admiration ; and well may it cause us to tremble and to weep when we again behold it at our very doors, spinning afresh its poisonous web, and gradually enclosing in that coil of death those whom we have known and loved, with whom we have taken sweet counsel together, and walked to the house of God in company ; but who now leave the pure worship of that house to prostrate themselves in abominable idolatry before idols of wood and stone, and gods of wheaten bread !

We must, however, return to Lavaur, as having formed a most important step in the advance of the invaders ; for, left as they at all times were to forage for themselves, lying before a fortress when the country all around had been exhausted of its supplies, and pillage could find nothing to grasp, was very discouraging. In the present instance, Count Raymond's bold prohibition

of the succours on which they had confidently reckoned, as the natural result of his notorious dread of Rome, almost led to mutiny in the hungry camp ; and a new series of reverses menaced de Montfort. All was now at an end ; the garrison, and all the inhabitants of Lavaur, were murdered ; the place itself plundered of whatever remained, and with fresh courage the destroying multitude moved on to new outrages against the Lord's poor flock.

It was now that the storm so long gathering round him, and so often averted at the expense of every honourable and manly feeling, fell upon Count Raymond. He had never yet experienced any direct attack on his possessions, although the sentence of excommunication so repeatedly renewed against him, placed them within the grasp of any successful assailant, and his life at the mercy of any bold assassin. De Montfort, stung by the inconvenience that he and his troops had lately suffered from Raymond's refusal of supplies, marched them at once to the castle of Montjoye, which belonged to the Count of Toulouse personally. Defence not being deemed practicable, the garrison forsook it ; and no other gratification could the crusaders obtain here, than the very insufficient one of demolishing stone walls. They razed it to the ground ; but no human victim appeared, to reward their eager quest for blood. Next in their reach stood another castle of Raymond's, —Cassero ; and this also was found indefensible against the fierce multitude who surrounded it ; but the inhabitants had no way of escape, and they capitulated. No scruple of course was made of seizing upon as many

as would afford an acceptable feast to the eyes of the conquerors : they took some sixty, probably the greater proportion of all whom the castle contained : and on the charge, whether just or not, of holding the doctrines of the gospel, they cast them upon a blazing pile of firewood : in the words of Peter the monk, " The soldiers, seizing nearly sixty heretics, burned them with infinite joy." Or, as the original stands, "*sed cum nec vinum convertere potuissēt exierunt à castro, peregrini autem arripientes hæreticos ferme sexaginta eos cum ingenti gaudio combusserunt.*" The character given by our Lord to his disciples in this world, is that of " lambs among wolves." Whose disciples were these, so systematically and ferociously enacting the part of wolves among lambs ?

The march proceeded ; castle after castle, and village after village was swept down and overwhelmed by this terrible flood. The latter, of course, like the insulated cottages of those bright vallies and fertile plains, fell at once beneath the murderous blow ; the fortified places were surrendered with the usual sanguinary consequences, unless their inmates found means of privately escaping during the enemy's approach. Spring had returned, and earth would fain have put forth her wonted beauties ; but all was forlorn ; the song of the husbandman had ceased, and the vine-dresser's hand was mouldering on the soil that once he loved to deck, or borne in imperceptible ashes on the breeze that should fan his cheek. Spring passed, and summer arrived, only to make more plain the fearful change that had passed over the land ; while, fired by the fame of his

deeds, and doubly assured of his final success, a vast body of reinforcements, principally from Germany, arrived to increase the terrors of the desolating army ; and de Montfort resolved on seizing the grandest prize that he had yet attempted, even the magnificent capital of the country, the powerful, wealthy, and to all appearance, impregnable city of Toulouse.

Here, it will be remembered, the turbulent bishop, Fouquet, had enrolled five thousand men for de Montfort's service, during the siege of Lavaur. They had not yet returned, but were summoned by him to do so ; and in the meanwhile he augmented this ' white company,' as he called it, to a very formidable body ; for the great bulk of citizens in Toulouse still professed allegiance to Rome, and willingly listened to the vehement asseverations of their bishop, that all the calamities which had fallen on their country, and which now menaced themselves, were the righteous visitations of the Most High, in punishment for their sinful connivance at the abode of notorious heretics among them, and the indifference with which they regarded the daring rebellion of these reprobates against the sovereign authority of the Church. To this he failed not to add, that the prince whom they served was himself lying under the ban of that Church ; and thus he represented to them the necessity of purging out from among them the transgressors, and of bringing all things once more into subjection to the pontiff. By such means he organized a very considerable band of influential men, who having bound themselves by oath to pursue all heretics to death, set up a tribunal, independent of lawful autho-

city, where they acted both as accusers and judges, the principal charges on which they arraigned their victims being those of heresy and usury. From judgment they proceeded to execution ; and not venturing so far as formally to take the lives of their fellow-citizens, they made the levying of fines, or recovery of pretended damages, an excuse for forcibly entering their houses, and committing whatsoever acts of violence and robbery they found opportunity for. No man was safe : all who were pointed out as being defective in allegiance to the Church ; all who were supposed to favour them ; all who, by liberality in lending to others had laid themselves open to the false accusation of making excessive profit by it, (and these, no doubt, were such as the malicious bishop suspected of what he called heresy, but was unable to prove against them) all were alike exposed to the invasion of a fierce mob, composed of their own neighbours, and of course containing many individuals who hated them personally on the same grounds that Cain hated Abel upon, and on which he that is "after the flesh" ever has persecuted him that is "after the Spirit : " these men came armed with the pretended authority of law, to execute judgment, while they only perpetrated cruelty and wrong. Such were the multiplied sufferings of the Church of Christ in those days ! So fared it with the poor sheep in the wilderness of this world.

But Toulouse possessed another class of citizens ; men who, without actually separating from the Romish communion, were heartily sick of the manifold abominations that prevailed in it—the pride, avarice, cruelty,

and dissoluteness of the priesthood, their former dronish ignorance, now suddenly changed into the most murderous zeal, and the horrible joy with which they celebrated the wholesale butcheries of their crusading companions: they were also indignant at the daring contempt displayed of constituted authority, and desertion of their ruler just when he most needed, and certainly best deserved their help; and no less at the inhuman persecution of the most harmless, blameless, and exemplary of their whole population. Actuated by such feelings, they lost no time in forming themselves into a protective society, which they denominated 'the black company,' and took such energetic measures for the suppression of the bishop's party that the whole city was shortly in a state of civil war. These hostile bands paraded the streets, fully armed, with characteristic banners displayed; and alternately they attacked, took, and destroyed portions of the fortifications which happened to be garrisoned by individuals of the adverse badge. Thus were the defences of the place weakened, and the way paved for an almost unresisted entrance, whenever the crusaders should think fit to attempt it.

But Raymond had thrown off the crushing yoke of Rome, so far as regarded his temporal rights; and with it, howsoever burdened his conscience might be with memories of the irrecoverable past, he was rid of an immense weight of present guilt, treachery, and servility. Once more he moved as an independent lord among the multitudes with whom he was still popular on many accounts; and feeling like a freed-man, both in body and mind, he acted accordingly, with more

wisdom and far greater determination than he had exhibited for many a day. Knowing that the return of the five thousand, fresh from the massacre of Lavaur, would tend both to feed the flame of enmity and to throw a great preponderance into the wrong scale, he watched for their arrival, and addressed them in terms, the justice of which they well understood, having been witnesses of the indiscriminate thirst for slaughter, for plunder, and for the temporal aggrandizement of their leader, that prevailed among the crusaders. He set before them, and ultimately before the whole company, the certainty of general destruction to which they were exposing themselves and their families, by rendering the city an easy conquest to those who conquered only to annihilate : he implored them to lay aside their differences for a time ; to unite in repairing what had been injured of the defences, and to restore what had fallen into decay. So well did he succeed with both parties, that a suspension of hostilities took place ; and he had the satisfaction of witnessing the first augury of a prosperous issue to the contest, in the goodwill with which the adverse companies betook themselves to that work that he had pointed out. There can be no doubt that Fouquet, in arming them one against the other, had acted on the usual principle of Rome ; by dividing to overcome, and to reign over a depopulated country.

Count Raymond, from being so long the degraded tool of Antichrist, was once more bearing the sword as an appointed ruler, therefore the vicegerent of God, over his people ; and the event was in just accordance with such a change. Its first result was not a little remark-

able : Fouquet, abandoning all hope of executing the behests of his masters, summoned around him his multitude of priests, all robed in canonical vestments, and denouncing the city as having become the abode of all evil, through the general excommunication that Arnold had fulminated against it from the camp, he had the wafer elevated on high, and barefooted, chaunting doleful litanies, the whole company quitted the place, Fouquet marching at their head, to throw themselves into the friendly arms of their crusading brethren. It was a happy day for Toulouse and for the harassed Raymond when these troublers took their departure : the whole population breathed more freely ; and, though there were not wanting many to bewail aloud the state of their deserted shrines, if all who in their hearts did not acknowledge it as a good deliverance had been set apart from the rest, they would have formed but a small company.

Cheerily and in good earnest the besieged now betook themselves to somewhat more than merely defensive operations. Raymond, no longer the craven and the crest-fallen, but once more the enterprising warrior of former days, was stimulated to new achievements as he saw before the walls of his magnificent capital the betrayer, the murderer of his gallant kinsman, Raymond Roger, usurping the titles and possessions of the infant heir, and glaring with the eager rapacity of a hungry wolf on the rich prize that he hoped to seize, by disposing in like manner of the uncle as he had done of the nephew. Moreover, Count Raymond had a long score of dark offences to wipe out, committed, and con-

nived at, against the people and the cause of God ; and against a multitude of innocent victims whom his treachery had mainly sacrificed to their inhuman foes. Thus excited, he placed himself at the head of his troops and citizens, who were enabled in the chieftain and prince to forget the flagellated offender against papal insolence, and by a succession of well-planned sallies, equally judicious as bold, he thinned the forces, intercepted the supplies, and so completely baffled all the plans of Simon, that well knowing the expiration of the next forty days would see a very large proportion of his fatigued and discomfited host abandon him, the haughty leader found it impossible even to remain before the walls on which he had boasted his flag should, long ere that period, float in triumph ; and he was compelled to quit the prey that of all others he most longed to grasp.

Retreat was not to be thought of: the domains of the Count of Foix offered the allurements of supposed inadequacy of defence, with ripening vineyards, and all the luxurious fertility of a Provençal summer. Thither he bent his steps, with such of the crusaders as still clave to him ; and many a deed of blood they wrought among the helpless inhabitants of a peaceful district. The sword was never sheathed, nor did the smoke of burning cease to ascend, so long as victims could be hunted out to satiate their demands. In this work the run-away priests of Toulouse were valuable auxiliaries : they knew the country well ; and they could point out not only rural dwellings, but whole villages that might have escaped the stranger's unaided search.

Brother betraying brother, parents delivering up their children to death, and pastors guiding the wolf to the bosom of the fold,—these were a few of the horrors that accompanied that fearful war against the saints. The undefended parts of Foix being thus desolated, de Montfort proceeded into the next territory, Quercy ; and here he extorted from the remnant of the slaughtered inhabitants, a recognition of his usurped title, as prince of a country which, lying under the ban of the pope, became the lawful perquisite of the pope's chief executioner.

As no affliction for the present seemeth joyous, but grievous ; and as it cannot be but that the heart of man will desire to see, if it be God's will, the cup of bitter sorrow removed from before him, we may feel assured that the persecuted people of God hailed with gladness the hope which rose upon them when their lawful rulers, the Counts of Toulouse, of Foix, and of Comminges, the Viscount of Bearn, Savary de Mauléon, and others, prepared to assail the invader, and to drive him from his prey. De Montfort was in his turn besieged in Castelnaudery, and for some time it appeared doubtful whether the day of retribution had not arrived, and deliverance dawned on the afflicted heritage of the Lord ; but after some desperate encounters, the persecutor escaped this threatening danger, and found himself reinforced by new levies. Still a measure of success attended the union of those who desired to protect their Christian subjects ; and Simon found himself driven back from his advanced position, the greater part of the castles

which he had captured retaken, his garrisons put to flight, or perishing by the sword that his unprecedented barbarities had whetted against all who followed his banner ; and his immense multitude of military auxiliaries dwindled away to a very small band of personal adherents. At the end of the year, such was his position, and such it remained for the next six months ; not through any slackening of the pace of those whose feet were ever swift to shed blood ; but because it had pleased the bishop of Rome to proclaim a new crusade in Spain, whither a great multitude hastened to wash out their sins in the blood of the Moors.

On this expedition, as being foreign to our subject, we do not dwell ; merely pausing to remark, that the exploits performed in Spain were by no means commensurate with the preparations made, and the great demonstration of military strength that the crusaders succeeded in displaying. The most remarkable feature of the campaign was the triumphant massacre of a whole population of innocent and defenceless Jews in Castile. It seemed as though, wherever a curse could be gathered, Rome must even step out of her regular path to appropriate it ; and here, for a little space, the lambs of the Lord's fold were left unmolested, that by a murderous attack on the poor lost sheep of the house of Israel, the daring adversary of the Most High might secure a claim to that awful promise, given respecting the seed of Abraham ; " I will curse them that curse thee." In vain did the Spaniards of Castile, at that time untainted with the desperate spirit of hatred and cruelty afterwards manifested in Spain against the

ancient people of God, rally round the Hebrew compatriots whom they had learned by observation and experience to love and respect, as did the Provençals their Albigensic neighbours : their aid was ineffectual, and Jewish blood dyed every garment among the ferocious soldiers of the cross. After this meritorious work, they took their departure, alleging that the climate of Spain became too sultry for them as summer advanced ; and returning home they found fresh excitements to rejoin their former banner under the Count de Montfort.

‘ Military events had indeed been stationary in the south of France, for an unusually long period ; but the great wheels of the machinery, the ecclesiastical department, had moved in a singular revolution. We have seen in the case of Fouquet, Bishop of Toulouse, with how fiery, how subtle, and how persevering a zeal the cause of Rome could be maintained by a prelate in what was regarded as the very nest and nucleus of all heresy ; and doubtless there were many others equally devoted with himself to that cause : but the Papal policy is to account nothing of friendly intentions, even when borne out by deeds, where others have shown themselves able to render more weighty service. The monks of Citeaux, as we have all along seen, were the great propelling power of the crusade, and their farther services must be secured, under the guise of a recompense for the past ; all being made, of course, subservient to the high interests and honour of their holy mother Church. To accomplish this, a pretext was made of great lack of zeal and activity among the secular clergy of the invaded provinces ; to their supineness

were attributed the recent reverses of De Montfort ; and to their indifferentism, the alarming spread of deadly heresies in their respective dioceses. This was enough : all must be sacrificed to the good cause ; and as a matter of course the suspected parties were removed, to make room for the more zealous brethren of Citeaux. Guy, the famous abbot of Vaux-cernay, obtained the bishopric of Carcassonne, by the resignation (enforced, no doubt) of its previous occupant ; but Arnold Amalric, the ferocious legate, chief of the order of Citeaux, here outdid himself, and somewhat damaged the cause, by his unscrupulous and unblushing ambition. Not content with the Archbishopric of Narbonne, he contrived, by a very characteristic manœuvre, to add thereto the temporal sovereignty of that rich province : when he fulminated the sentence of excommunication against Raymond VI., instead of naming a successor to the several states, he added a clause, securing each lordship to whosoever should be first to occupy the place. It only remained for him to repair to Narbonne, which he did in the character of Archbishop, and thereon grounded his claim to the entire sovereignty. Only six days elapsed between his assumption of the archiepiscopal dignity, and his demand for homage as the Viscount de Narbonne.

This step exceedingly enraged de Montfort ; who, reasonably enough, supposed that his compact with Rome, while it secured to her the blood of the inhabitants, left the land and the gold, no less than the spiritual recompense, to her warrior-executioners. A rupture between two such leaders as the Count and the

Legate boded no good ; and a deeper effect was produced, by convincing some, even of the persecuting party, that these enthusiastic missionaries of Citeaux had somewhat of more tangible value in prospect, while exercising their vocation to the slaughter of so many thousand innocent fellow-beings, than the canonization with which the Church might perchance some day crown their memories. The effect was widely felt, and perhaps it was a stroke of policy on the part of Arnold to leave as he did his new-found honours for a while, and volunteer to accompany the crusade into Spain. We can penetrate but a little way the mystery of iniquity in these its dark and long-past workings, but whether more or less be revealed to our gaze, we find it ever the same, ever wily, active, inveterately hostile in its actings against God's truth and people ; but never losing sight of the great object of temporal aggrandisement, whether as a whole, or in its several parts.

The return of midsummer found the devastated provinces but little recovered from the wretched state in which the destroyer had left them. The land, indeed, was but too richly watered with the blood that tended to fertilize it anew ; but hands were lacking to dress the sprouting vine, and where such were found, the hearts that should have cheered them to the work were sad, and heavy, and full of despondency. Too well they knew that the vulture held his perch on their confines ; and that the diversion which had for a short season kept him unaided, would speedily be at an end. The extermination of such as dared openly to protest against any of Rome's abominations, was, moreover, nearly com-

plete in those territories ; the life and strength-giving faith that had upheld the martyrs was only to be found, scattered and obscured, beneath the low roofs of distant cottages ; and little could be descried beyond the melancholy inertness of a mass who knew themselves doomed to temporal destruction, without enjoying the assured prospect of an inheritance reserved in heaven for them—the purchase and the gift of the Son of God.

Their anticipations were realized : the monks of Citeaux, inflamed with new ardour by the substantial marks of gratitude recently conferred on their order, betook themselves to preaching in an enlarged sphere, and with increased vehemence. De Montfort's army was quickly swelled again to its wonted extent : and as he renewed his advance, the intimidated Toulousians were glad to abandon every fortress that they had retaken, saving by flight their own lives. Occasionally the footsteps of the Church of Christ were to be traced again, even over this worn-out track, in vestiges of blood and scorching embers, when some simple country hind, some vine-dresser, or peasant girl, who had been captured by the scouts of the crusading force, had witnessed a good profession, and endured the last fiery trial of a faith that could not fail : but so well had the work been accomplished in the preceding years, that of all the few castles which now dared a show of resistance, two only, those of St. Antonin and of St. Marcel, furnished a tolerable number of victims whom the persecutors could put to death avowedly for the truth's sake which they openly held. Many suffered here. At another place,

Boissac, against whom he prevailed after a spirited defence, de Montfort could not find a pretext for bringing the charge of heresy against any of its inhabitants ; yet to allow them, as then it was his policy to do, to capitulate, without a massacre of some sort, would have been too severe a trial for him : he therefore hit on an expedient scarcely credible in our days. The people of Boissac had been greatly aided in their defence by the willing services of a body of routiers, who happened then to be within their walls, to the number of three hundred men. These rude soldiers, who knew nothing of controversial matters, and lived merely by the sword, wherever they could find employ, had enabled the garrison not only to hold out so far, but to demand fair terms as the price of a surrender now. The only terms that the ferocious conqueror would grant were these—that the citizens should suddenly rise upon and massacre their unsuspecting and valuable fellow-helpers, the routiers. There was no alternative : the cold calculations of de Montfort were always borne out by the event ; and no hope, save for a short and uncertain respite, with a general destruction very certain to follow it, appeared to the wretched citizens. That they were not true christians is evident from the fact of their fulfilling the terms of this infamous contract : that the routiers were not accounted as belonging to the people of Christ, is equally evident, from the crusaders being willing that any hands but their own should perpetrate the murder.

Toulouse and Montauban were now become the only places of refuge for the terrified people : no other was

considered of strength sufficient to withstand the terrible siege of de Montfort, whose natural cruelty and thirst for blood seemed to have received a new stimulus and to rage with tenfold violence, since the defection of the legate, and his subsequent inactivity during the Spanish crusade. So rapid was his advance, and so alarming his successes, that Count Raymond deemed it right to hasten in person to the court of his sovereign, and brother-in-law, Peter, King of Arragon, to claim as a vassal that sovereign's aid against an invader who, under pretence of more fully establishing the ecclesiastical supremacy, which both the Count and the King acknowledged, was wresting the temporal possessions of the former from their rightful lord, and bringing the dominions of the latter into subjection to a foreign prince. For it was de Montfort's care, wheresoever he established his authority, to render everything French: he issued formal decrees compelling, among other things, all widows and heiresses to marry Frenchmen only, for the space of the next ten years: thus most effectually extinguishing the pride of those high Provençal houses who had ever gloried in their unsullied descent from the ancient Goths, or from the ancient Romans; thence deriving no small share of that independence which led the most worldly among them to espouse the cause of their humble Christian compatriots, against what they regarded as an attempt at foreign temporal usurpation.

We have already seen Peter of Arragon under very favourable circumstances, as encouraging his noble nephew, Raymond Roger, to maintain the cause of his

oppressed and persecuted subjects at Carcassonne, and labouring on that injured young man's behalf. He was, indeed, a man of generous mind, and honourable temper; with a cultivated understanding which raised him as far above the credulity of Rome's few honest followers as his high sense of honour did above the cunning craftiness of her many self-interested flatterers. That he was an enlightened man in spiritual things we cannot venture to hope: his name comes down to us as that of a gallant warrior, actuated by the romantic spirit of chivalry, an elegant, but frivolous poet; a king who never willingly or knowingly acquiesced in the oppression of his subjects for conscience' sake; and one who was ready to peril his life in defence of any that he deemed a just cause. Beyond this, we can ascertain nothing: he was greatly misled by habits of flattering admiration towards women, and by the general laxity then, and alas! now, too characteristic of regal courts. We can only look upon him as a monarch called forth to defend the scattered fragments of the riven Church, to prove how vain was the help of man, when the Lord had permitted the terrible Beast of prophecy to make war with the saints, and for a time to overcome them.

The publication of Simon's tyrannical decrees, issued from Pamiers at the time of Count Raymond's visit to Arragon, greatly tended to the furtherance of his suit. As lord of Beziers and of Carcassonne, de Montfort would have been the subject of Peter, and his first duty was to tender the homage of allegiance to his rightful monarch; but so far from being this, he openly

proclaimed himself a liege-man of France, and with eager haste proceeded to supplant whatever savoured of ancient fidelity to the rightful king. Pedro was considered to be in high favour with the Pope, who had always regarded him with peculiar good will, and his intercession was considered powerful enough to cope with the mighty influence of de Montfort at Rome ; the more reasonably, as it could be plainly shewn that in his sanguinary progress the latter had made the well-being of the so-called Church a very minor consideration indeed ; being intent only on establishing his own authority, and enlarging the kingdom of France, at the expence of a dutiful son of that church, such as Peter of Arragon had always shewn himself to be. No doubt his shutting himself up with a handful of personal adherents to retain a grasp on the conquered Carcassonne, when Innocent himself had sounded the alarm for a crusade beyond the Pyrennees, was kept in view ; and the fact, that, in the last province which he had both invaded and devastated, Agenois, no taint of heresy had been alleged to prevail, all the inhabitants being professedly Romanists, made exceedingly against the supposed pious devotion of the Count. That any actual compunction visited the papal bosom, for the cruel sufferings of the innocent Albigenses, it would be hard to believe : that any softening of the opposing and self-exalting spirit which warreth against God and his saints took place, would be to suppose that, for a short season, Antichrist forsook his seat on the seven-hilled city. We must refer all these changes and mutations, overruled as they were and are, and always shall be, by the

sovereign power of the Most High, to the wisdom that cometh from beneath ; earthly, sensual, devilish : always seeking the pre-eminence, and always thirsting for the blood of the martyrs of Jesus.

One thing more must be kept in view : it appears that Count Raymond had anew placed himself under the unreserved and unlimited control of the Pope : that he had offered a pledge to go to the Holy land, or whithersoever he might be commanded to go, leaving his son to inherit his possessions, whose unshaken fidelity to the Roman pontificate was doubly guaranteed by the king of Arragon ; and so far from weakening, the plan proposed was calculated to strengthen the power of the Pope ; who could not but feel that, with all his wonderful daring, and all his most unrivalled craftiness, he was often made individually of less account by his own creatures than he was willing to admit. In the present instance, he was incited to act a part rarely ventured on by the occupant of Peter's feigned seat ; to try the power of a Pope against the spirit of Popery,—to raise the voice of the Beast's image against those who gave it life, and motion, and utterance, and at whose command the world worshipped it. This experiment never yet succeeded ; the sharp reprimands of Innocent III., addressed to the fierce and arrogant prelate of Narbonne, and the other usurped sees, were indeed received with all outward respect : but when the council assembled, which he had commanded them to call together, for the reparation of some of the many scandalous wrongs, perpetrated during the crusades, against such as held allegiance to Rome, and the resto-

ration of the Counts of Toulouse, Bearn, Foix, and other excommunicate lords to their rights, temporal and spiritual, their every decree was in direct defiance alike of the letter and of the spirit of these public instructions. They justified all that was there condemned ; made doubly fast all that they were told to unloose : renewed their insolent sentences of excommunication ; and, moreover, rendered to the Vatican reasons so satisfactory for these proceedings, by means of that subtle, ever-working machinery that, making Rome its centre, has for many centuries convulsed, and in a great measure governed the whole world, that the wretched puppet of Satanic rule again veered round, and granted a tacit confirmation of all these iniquitous proceedings.

The relation of the war, in a military point of view, becomes at this juncture exceeding interesting ; but with wars and fighting we have nothing to do, except as they bear on the history of the persecuted saints. The king of Arragon, justly exasperated at such double perfidy, no longer hesitated to aid in person the aggrieved lords : he chose out a thousand knights, the flower of his army, long accustomed to battle against the Moors in Spain, and placing himself at their head, joined the forces of the Languedocian nobles, now prepared to give battle to de Montfort, wheresoever he should choose his ground. The recruiting brethren of Citeaux were everywhere on the alert ; France poured forth her chivalry, in bright and terrible legions of mail-clad horsemen, the great strength, in those days, of a hostile force. Squadron after squadron, clad in iron mail, and most formidably armed with every weapon of destruction,

while gold and silver and gorgeous housings in every variety, added to the imposing magnificence of their army, were marshalled on the plains. Seven bishops, in all the harlot pomp and bravery of their apostate Church, had joined to bless, in solemn mockery, the various standards of this embattled host, which numbered in its ranks but too many representatives from every country over which the idol crucifix bore sway : and then, followed by shoals of priestly abettors, they proceeded on the wonted scent of blood. It was truly a fearful war, of man against man ; of Papal vassals defending the fair land bequeathed them by their fathers against papal vassals, who sought, on any pretext, to shed their blood, and to despoil them of those possessions. They met near the town of Muret, three miles from Toulouse ; de Montfort was victorious, the king of Arragon was slain by some who had bound themselves to fight with none but him ; but who, by surrounding and overpowering, succeeded in completing what may well be called a murder. For the rest of the routed host, not one escaped whom the spear of the merciless victor could pierce, or his mailed hands succeed in plunging beneath the waters of the Garonne, which that day ran red with the blood of thousands.

CHAPTER SIXTH.



THE WEARING OUT.





CHAPTER VI.

THE WEARING OUT.

“PRINCE of the kings of the earth;” “King of kings, and Lord of lords;” these are among the many incommunicable titles of the Redeemer, the Lord Jesus

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Christ ; and it cannot but be that the enemy who usurps his power and authority over so vast a portion of his nominal subjects, should lay claim to these high, distinctive names. It has been so, from the commencement of the reign of the developed "Man of Sin," even to our day, to this period, when the ruler of the Vatican received from the mighty Prince of Rosh, of Meshech and Tubal, the feudal homage of kissing his ring ; and when he denounced as sore rebellion against God, the measures taken by the lofty Czar to curb the power of Rome. In this world of change, it is really wonderful to mark the unchanging features of that gigantic imposture which has lorded it so long over God's heritage ; and which is destined to fall at last from a more fearfully daring height of wickedness than it has ever yet attained.

In this usurped character of "Prince of the kings of the earth," did the papacy adjudge the gallant king of Arragon to be a traitor, and to have justly fallen in the act of rebellion against its power. Innocent, 'servant of the servants of God,' assuming to dispose at will of the kingdoms of the world, ever sought to place his heel on the neck of refractory monarchs ; and the death of Peter, falling in battle against the priest-led crusaders, could not but be an event highly favourable to his assumptions ; nor did they fail to represent it as a direct judgment from above. The fact of the royal heir, Don Jayme, being actually in the hands of de Montfort, to whom, in some moment of infatuation, his father had confided him, increased the exultation of one party, and the dismay of the other. But an appeal to Rome, on

the part of his subjects, vigorously supported, and secretly, no doubt, aided by a growing jealousy of de Montfort's immense power, proved effectual: the prince was restored, and allowed to ascend his father's throne. Meanwhile, though Muret was so near Toulouse, that the perfect victory obtained there seemed to decide the fate of the capital, it was productive of no important results to the victors. Satisfied with their achievements, and deeply dyed in the blood of those who, if not themselves accused of heresy, were fighting in the heretical cause of excommunicated princes, the crusaders quickly dispersed themselves after the battle; and whatever advantages de Montfort might have anticipated from being the unresisted master of the field, and within some half-hour's march of Toulouse, he was rendered unable to carry out his designs, by seeing his legions melt away, until only a skeleton army remained with him; while the new legate appointed to succeed Arnold proved a poor ally; for he, instead of pursuing with fire and sword the lords of Toulouse, of Foix, and others, as did his predecessor, persuaded them to take shelter under his protection, and made peace between them and his Church, on terms exceedingly advantageous to the latter; ruinous and disgraceful to them, as independent lords. This took place at Narbonne; and Peter, our great authority, characterises it as a pious fraud, by which the legate cajoled the heretical leaders, while de Montfort, with a recruited army, passed unresisted into Agenois, carrying on, with very little hindrance, the work of cruelty and blood. Few victims, of the kind which they most panted after, remained to glut their feroci-

ous hatred : the Lord's people had fallen by the sword, by famine, and by the miseries of hopeless flight, for so many days, that they seemed to be well nigh extinct. Yet, occasionally, a company was collected, worthy the martyrdom that awaited them, and who, instead of being, like their less suspected countrymen, merely slaughtered in an ordinary way, were burnt alive with all the solemnity, and all the joy, that such a spectacle was calculated to call forth. Murillac was one of the places so happily distinguished ; and Peter de Vaux-Cernay thus records it. ' I must not omit to state that we found there seven heretics, of the sect called Waldenses. Being conducted to the legate, they confessed their unbelief ; and were then seized by our pilgrims, and burned with unspeakable joy.' This is the first instance of our finding the ancient and truly apostolic Church of the Waldenses providing victims for the Albigenic persecution. Distinct in their origin, their history, and their place of abode, these were yet twin branches of the true Vine ; holding one Lord, one faith, one baptism ; and ultimately sharing one doom, of all that man's most deadly cruelty could inflict on earth : all that God has reserved for His dear children, the saints and martyrs of Jesus, in heaven. Success appeared to wait on the steps of the wretched man whose whole life was devoted to this most awfully wicked work of seeking to root out the Church of Christ from the earth. He made it, indeed, notoriously subservient to his selfish passions, his lust of plunder and of power ; his natural cruelty, and detestation of all that was good ; but though on many occasions it was manifest that the

dragon's vicegerent understood the baseness of Simon's character as well as the dragon himself understood his, he was too able and too successful in the work of slaughter to be discarded as a fitting tool. He, therefore, remained unchecked in his frightful career of blood and rapacity ; to fall, in due time, beneath the arm of Almighty vengeance.

But the flock of the Lord, the beautiful and harmless flock that had so long been pastured in those vallies, where now were they ? Seven years had elapsed since the first outrage was committed by attacking Beziers ; and changed as was the face of the once-smiling country, far more changed was its spiritual aspect. What the apostate Church called heresy, could no where be found : the light was extinguished ; the gates of hell had to all appearance prevailed against the Church of Christ throughout the region where it had for so long a period flourished in peace.

Behold that toil-worn traveller, who, in homely apparel, and with a pack of humble wares slung from his shoulders, is slowly and listlessly pursuing his way along a path once well defined and frequented, but now torn up, and well-nigh obliterated by continual alternations of the trampling march, and the utter desertion that must needs follow, where those who proceeded onward left not alive any human being within reach of their grasp. He seems to know it well, and keeps so correctly within its original boundaries as to excite the attention of some few scattered labourers, who have rebuilt their ruined cots, and are tilling the deteriorated soil. These had fled to the mountain caves, or other-

wise concealed themselves, while the destroying hosts swept by : and now they are again on the site of their former houses, again engaged in rural occupation, and one might hope that it is with them as in days past, when the candle of the Lord shone upon their tabernacle. The traveller is one who formerly stood conspicuous among the bold teachers of Gospel truth, in that neighbourhood, where pure religion was more openly countenanced, and the doctors of the faithful Church more freely encouraged than in most other places around it. He, the pedlar, now bending less with age or bodily feebleness than with sorrow, had there held many a disputation with the assailants of the faith, and put to silence the subtle sophistries with which they sought to beguile the souls of his people. He had oft been the honoured guest of the feudal sovereign, who ruled that province ; and well was he remembered when, in his progress, but a few days since, he presented himself at the castle-gate that had always been flung wide at his approach ; but terror and dismay overspread the countenances of those who so readily recalled the voice and features of one concerning whom it was doubtful whether he had perished in the flames, or fallen by the sword or famine, or found a refuge in some distant clime. Word was speedily brought to the Count of the dangerous guest who stood without ; and he, lately reconciled to Rome, and delivered from the ban of excommunication on a pledge of using his utmost efforts to root out every vestige of heresy wheresoever he should detect it, was for a moment in doubt whether to connive at the escape of a teacher, to whom his mas-

ters would have adjudged an abode in the deepest dungeon of the castle, with no means of prolonging life, even if that life were not publicly sacrificed to Rome. A better feeling prevailed ; remembrance of the happy past, and the knowledge that the victim of persecution was a holy man, devoted to God in the Gospel of His Son, and eminently fruitful in every good word and work, restrained the unhappy noble from adding to his own sin, and to the sorrows of a helpless exile : he despatched a knight who fully understood the matter, and participated in his feeling, to inform the wanderer that the inmates of the castle had no need of his merchandise, nor was it agreeable to their lord's will that strangers of a doubtful aspect should find admittance in these troublous times, when some evil-disposed persons were supposed to be creeping abroad, to unsettle the minds of the people, and to shake their allegiance to their sovereign lord and ruler, the vicegerent of God, the most holy and venerated pontiff.

All this was spoken, in a loud, a fierce, and a decided voice, in the hearing of those who stood near : but there was that in the old knight's eye, as, with face averted from the rest he kept it stedfastly fixed on the pastor's, which bespoke a grief and a sympathy strangely opposed both to the tenor and the tone of his speech. Touched to his inmost soul, the preacher meekly bowed submission ; and with upraised eyes, silently invoking the blessing that he dared not to utter aloud, he turned from the frowning battlements, to seek a lowlier shelter in the vale below.

The scattered huts among which he now passed were

occupied by a race altogether unknown to him ; probably adventurers from France, placed there by the wily de Montfort, to supply the lack of inhabitants where his sword had cut off every living thing. With these he sought and found a supply of his present wants ; bartering the small wares of his pack for their simple fare. But ere long the scene changed, and he now finds himself among familiar faces, though intermingled with many perfectly strange. These latter were staunch and vigilant adherents to the papacy, carefully scattered about the land, to watch, and to give due notice if a symptom appeared, in public or in private, either of the retention or revival of heresy in any form whatever.

With an overflowing heart does that beloved teacher approach the objects of his former care ; and quickly is he recognized, as the deep pantings of many a bosom declare, while the brow perchance is knitted, to discourage, and the head bent or the eye averted, to shun him. There is no sign of welcome, no whispering salutation of peace : nothing but an evident dread, lest his presence should lead to their destruction. By some, the crucifix is hastily displayed, as a token that, before man at least, they know no better hope than such lying vanities can impart ; and others, by a loud remark to a neighbouring assistant, convey the intimation that their creed is that which of old they abjured.

Meanwhile, a group of children, and very young persons, gather around the traveller, demanding to see the contents of his pack, which he readily spreads before them ; gazing with wistful curiosity in their blooming

faces, touched as some among them were with traces of early suffering, and more than one or two exhibiting scars from the cuts of a merciless sabre. Among those who bent over the scattered treasures, he is struck by the countenances of two lovely girls, twins, whose close resemblance to each other is scarcely greater than what both bear to a peasant who was once the very flower of his flock in that district ; and well he remembers baptizing twin girls of her's some ten years previously, and sweet is the recollection of the season of prayer and praise that marked the event. A longing desire to hear of her, half subdued by fear lest the tale of apostacy should blight his once confident hope in the firm faith of that devoted woman, leads him to watch every movement of the lively twins, until at length one of them, selecting an article, holds it up, demanding its price. As she shakes back the wild ringlet from her brow, the resemblance becomes more striking ; and he answers her enquiry, adding, ' If your mother, young maiden, approves the purchase, we shall not dispute about the price.' ' What know you of her mother ? ' asked a sinister-looking young man who stood by : and the teacher, fearing for these lambs of a broken fold, replies, ' I know not even their names, or yours, or any around me : but the young should seek to be guided by parental wisdom, even in trifling things.' ' She has no mother, happily for her ! ' was the remark of several of the bystanders : and the girl herself hastily added, ' My mother was burnt with fifteen other heretics, by the holy pilgrims, four years ago.' ' And we are good Catholics, and hate all heresy,' said the other twin.

This little incident told a tale more comprehensive, more heart-rending, than many a day's investigation might have done. The children spoke, evidently in some terror: and the very tone in which their remarks were made proved them to have been learned by rote. The pedlar gathered his wares up, after disposing of a few, and crossing in heavy silence the vineyard, he perceived the father of the twins engaged at his work. Resolved to discover some ground of consolation here, he neither approached him nor attracted his attention: but seeking present rest in a secluded corner, awaited the close of day; then to seek the humble dwelling where his heart told him he should find the wanted welcome.

He went: the father was seated in his hut, and around him the few children left of a large family, one of whom was crippled and helpless from the effects of savage cruelty. The teacher entered, and threw off his slouching cap, and stood fully revealed, prepared to fold in a paternal embrace these objects of his solicitous care. The father sprang from his seat, and with frantic gesture, in tones of wild, but smothered passion, exclaimed, 'Begone! begone! Is it not yet enough? has not the flame been fed? has not the sword been glutted? has not the rack enjoyed its prey? Come you here to mark out the victims anew, to let loose the bloodhounds—the holy pilgrims—the crusaders—on a ravaged district? Begone to your concealment, be it where it may; and God help you safe back to it! but leave us, leave the place, we are changed now: we are loyal to — begone!'

It was enough : the pastor's cup of sorrow was full. Farther search he deemed fruitless for any good effect, and pregnant with peril to his lost flock. He turned, prepared to retrace his steps to the place of his distant refuge, where, in rocks and caves, were hidden a smaller band of fugitives to whose persevering entreaties, and almost violence, he owed his own safety. Sad were the tidings he must bear to them, of many whom he had seen under circumstances that scarcely allowed a hope to linger in his breast, as to their fidelity to the faith : but he cast himself on the firm rock of Christ's word, in reference to such as were truly his sheep—"I give unto them eternal life, and none is able to pluck them out of my hand ;" and thus, sorrowful, yet alway rejoicing, he pursued the pathway home.

Seldom indeed was any found sufficiently daring to make, however disguised, such a pilgrimage ; for the terrors that had led perhaps not a few into open apostasy from the faith in which they had been brought up, prevailed with multitudes to whom that faith was never more than an object of careless toleration or involuntary respect, to become vigilant observers of, and eager informers against, suspected characters. They were not generally actuated by real hostility, but wrought upon by the unspeakable dread that such horrors as they had recently witnessed could not but inspire : and in some instances, no doubt, regarding their teachers as the authors of their calamities, they entertained a vindictive feeling which their spiritual guides well knew how to keep alive, and to turn to their own account. Of the former class was he from whose abode the pastor

had been rudely expelled ; and who well knew that he was surrounded and watched by many of the latter. One effect, and indeed the most fatal of all, was the cessation of all scriptural instruction in the families of those who themselves still cherished in their hearts the love of the truth. Children were too open and unguarded to be entrusted with the perilous secret : they were carefully looked after, and rigidly questioned by the priests and friars who now ruled the land despotically ; and to keep them in utter ignorance of their parents' sentiments, to help them to forget what they might already have learned, and to inculcate implicit obedience to the papacy in all its branches, was the only resource of those who still looked forward to a time when the Lord should arise on their behalf, and restore to them the precious privilege of worshipping Him according to the revelation of his will, and the dictates of his Spirit. So far as outward appearance went, true religion was utterly extinct among them ; the most abject submission to Popish authority having succeeded liberty of conscience. The reconciled lords set the example of scrupulous observance where their inmost souls scorned and detested the puerile follies, unmeaning mummeries, and burdensome restraints by which they were shackled. The manliness of simple truth had won their respect, and its fruits of straight-forward integrity had excited their admiration, contrasted as they were with the marked opposites in the clergy and the devotees of Rome : but they had not given their hearts to God : they were not personally partakers in the like precious faith with those whom they had es-

teemed and protected : and when the alternative alone remained to them of indeed losing all, including probably their lives, for the gospel's sake, or of purchasing security in their possessions at the price of a seeming submission in all things to a power whose yoke they had always professed to wear, little hesitation could be expected. Their subjects, seeing them ostentatiously forward in all acts of outward obsequiousness to the priesthood, and all observances of Romish superstition, felt that no hope remained for them. The most devoted of the simple followers of Christ had perished in the flames, on the gibbet, by the sword, or the rack ; others, following the direction given to the early Church, fled from the scene of their persecution to such places of refuge as they could find : and the remnant sank under the weight of calamities that had left them a mere handful, scattered up and down in what was now an enemy's country. Public teaching was of course unthought of, where men dared not assemble three or four together for private exhortation and united prayer, lest one of the number should prove a traitor. Ordinances ceased from among them : all means of grace were withheld ; and the light of the gospel faded away, and the tree which the Lord had planted, withered and drooped, and cast its leaves, a bare, desolate monument of what it once had been.

By such means has the great Mystery of iniquity always prevailed in warring against the saints, where power was permitted answerable to its wicked will. Its dragon voice has been heard to the uttermost bounds of the earth, saying to its agents, " Arise, devour much

flesh." It is only when some limit is placed to its external working, that the lamb's horns are exhibited in ostentatious meekness to a deceived world, and the 'servant of the servants of God' ceases to fulminate decrees of universal slaughter, breathing out gentle tones of humility and peace. We have seen, so far, its operations against the true followers of the true Lamb : it will be our next step to show the actual embodying, the solemn ratification, the indelible stamping and sealing of Papal Rome's most murderous principles, as acted out in the twelfth century, in an unrepealed decree of the infallible Church, now in full force all over the world ; and even now, thanks to the desperate infatuation of nominally Protestant rulers, in full operation HERE, in Great Britain, the supposed fortress of Protestantism ; the chosen and favoured, but, alas ! not the faithful witness among all nations, of those truths for which her noblest and her lowliest children yielded with equal freeness their lives at the stake, as a testimony against what their descendants are warming and cherishing in their bosoms, to give new vigour to the sting already aimed at their immortal souls. The fourth Council of Lateran was held during this pause of death, and we cannot lightly pass it over.

The ostensible object of Lotharius de Signi in assembling the twelfth General Council, the fourth that met in the Lateran Palace, and thence derived its name, was to revive the spirit of the Eastern rather than to forward the interests of the Western crusade. The latter appeared to have done its work : the voice of

the gospel had been silenced, and the poor remnant of a torn and scattered flock had fled, or concealed themselves, or put on the semblance of conformity with what they loathed, to save themselves and their little ones from the butcher's knife. It was enough that Simon de Montfort had fixed his vulture eye upon the territory, and extended as he could his grasp, in the character of the church's champion. He alone was now held sufficient to cope with all opposition in that quarter ; and some danger appeared of an approaching pause, in which the enthralled monarchs of Christendom might have leisure to contemplate their fetters, and possibly to devise a way of freeing themselves from the galling yoke of Rome. It behoved the haughty and subtle pontiff to avert such a contingency : he therefore summoned this famous Council to meet in the Great City which ruleth over the kings of the earth ; and proudly did he look down upon the glittering scene, where representatives of every nation appeared, to own the vassalage in which their respective sovereigns were content to abide under the despotic rule of the self-exalted Man of Sin. There were present in that spacious edifice the patriarchs of Constantinople and of Jerusalem, an ambassador from the patriarch of Antioch ; seventy-four metropolitan primates, three hundred and forty bishops, eight hundred abbots and friars, and clergy generally of the higher orders whose numbers defied calculation. These formed the ecclesiastical portion of the assembly ; while of crowned monarchs were seen the selected representatives of the Emperor of Constantinople, the kings of Jerusalem, of England, France, Hungary,

Arragon, and very many others, who were there to yield the abject assent of their sovereigns to whatever this Italian despot might deem it right to dictate. He did, in fact, alone and with despotic authority, draw up the whole series of chapters, now known as the decrees of that famous Council ; and laid them before the assembled delegates, as the mandate of one whose will was law. Some discontent is reported to have been betrayed, on various points, by certain of the members ; and, perhaps, the pope's arrogant mode of proceeding stirred up the resentment of some : but this man had now for seventeen years wielded the destinies of west and east, and was still in the vigour of active life, not having completed his fifty-third year. To resist the Sovereign Pontiff, and that Pontiff Innocent III., in matters appertaining to the Church of which he was just accounted the pillar—meet pillar for such a Church !—would have been to raise a storm that none cared to brave :—therefore were the decrees of the fourth Lateran Council silently ratified, without discussion, and thenceforth they became part and parcel of the laws of the papacy ; as such, distinctly recognized, and for ever rendered imperative, by the memorable Council of Trent, which was the first General Council that ever embodied in one form, and solemnly ratified by authority assuming to be infallible, the vague, subtle, shifting and evadible dogmas of the Romish Apostacy.

The decrees or canons of the fourth Lateran Council amounted to twenty, bearing on various subjects, and ostensibly framed for other purposes ; but the third of those canons seems to have breathed the inmost feelings

of Lotharius de Signi's heart. It is entitled 'De Hæreticis,' and its object is to put down, thenceforth and for ever, all opposition to the system of Rome; to pluck up and to destroy every plant of God's planting that should peep above the ground where the Great Harlot reigns. A project vain as impious: but with what craft and subtlety devised, and how keenly pointed at the bosoms of the poor Albigenses, a slight examination may assure us. At the same time, a consciousness of being ourselves included in the class here treated of, and of lying, *bona fide*, under the same sentence, suspended only because the Romish arm has not yet regained sufficient power to make war upon us, and to crush us, such consciousness must add a deeper interest to the perusal of this infamous canon, which we will give entire.

"WE excommunicate and anathematize every heresy which exalteth itself against this holy, orthodox, and catholic faith, which we have set forth above; condemning *all heretics*, by whatsoever names they may be reckoned; who have indeed divers faces, but their tails are bound together, for they make agreement in the same folly.*

"Let such persons, when condemned, be left to the secular powers who may be present, to be punished in a fitting manner; those who are of the clergy being first degraded from their orders: so that the goods of such condemned persons, if they shall be laymen, be con-

* This allusion to Samson's foxes, having their tails tied together with firebrands, was a favorite figure of Pope Innocent's, as applied to the nobles of Languedoc.

fiscated ; but in the case of clerks, be applied to the churches from which they derived their stipenda.

“ But let those who are only marked with suspicion, be smitten with the sword of anathema, and be shunned by all men until they make proper satisfaction ; unless, according to the grounds of suspicion, and the quality of the person, they shall have demonstrated their innocence by a proportionate purgation. So that if they shall persevere in excommunication for a twelvemonth, thenceforth let them be condemned as heretics. And let the secular powers, whatever offices they may discharge, be admonished and induced, and, if need be, compelled by ecclesiastical censure, that, as they desire to be reputed and accounted faithful, so, for the defence of the faith, they publicly set forth on oath that to the utmost of their power, they will, bona fide, strive to exterminate from the lands subject to their jurisdiction, all heretics pointed out by the church ; so that where-soever any person is advanced, either to temporal or spiritual power, he be bound to confirm this decree with an oath.

“ But if any temporal lord, being required and admonished by the church, shall neglect to cleanse his country of this heretical filth, let him be bound with the chain of excommunication, by the metropolitan and the other co-provincial bishops. And if he shall scorn to make satisfaction within a year, let this be signified to the supreme pontiff ; that, thenceforth, he may declare his vassals to be absolved from their fidelity to him, and may expose his land to be occupied by the Catholics, who, the heretics being exterminated, may

without contradiction possess it, and preserve it in the purity of the faith : saving the right of the chief lord, so long as he presents no obstacle, and offers no hindrance in this matter : the same law, nevertheless, being observed concerning those who have not lords in chief.

“ But let the Catholics who, having taken the sign of the cross, have girded themselves for the extermination of the heretics, enjoy the same indulgence, and be armed with the same holy privilege, as is conceded to those who go to the assistance of the Holy Land.

“ But we decree also, that the believers, the receivers, the defenders, and abettors of the heretics, lie under excommunication : firmly determining that if any one, after he has been marked with excommunication, shall refuse to make satisfaction within a twelvemonth, he is thenceforth of right in very deed infamous, and be not admitted to public offices or councils ; nor to elect any person for any thing of the sort, nor to give evidence. Let him also be intestible, so as neither to have power to bequeath, nor to succeed to any inheritance.

“ Moreover, let no man be obliged to answer him in any matter, but let him be compelled to answer others. If haply he be a judge, let his sentence have no force, nor let any causes be brought for his hearing. If he be an advocate, let not his pleading be admitted. If a notary, let the instruments drawn up by him be invalid, and be condemned with their damned author. And we charge that the same be observed in similar cases. But if he be a clerk, let him be deposed from every office and benefice, that where there is the greater fault, the heavier vengeance may be exercised.

“ But if any shall fail to shun such persons after they have been pointed out by the church, let them be compelled by the sentence of excommunication to make fitting satisfaction. Let the clergy by no means administer the sacraments of the church to such pestilent persons, nor presume to commit them to christian burial, nor receive their alms nor oblations : otherwise let them be deprived of their office, to which let them never be restored without the special indulgence of the Apostolic See. In like manner any regulars on whom also this may be inflicted, that their privileges in that diocese, in which they shall have dared to perpetrate such excesses, be not preserved.

“ But because some, under the semblance of piety, *but denying the power thereof*, as the Apostle says, assume to themselves the authority of preaching, when the same Apostle says, ‘ How shall they preach except they be sent ? ’ let all who, being prohibited, or not sent, shall presume publicly or privately to usurp the office of preaching, be bound with the chain of excommunication, and, unless they immediately repent, they shall be smitten with other suitable punishment.

“ We add, moreover, that every archbishop or bishop shall either by himself, his archdeacon, or other honest and suitable persons, twice, or at least once every year, go round his own parish [diocese] in which there shall be a report that heretics are dwelling ; and there shall compel three or more men of credible testimony, or if it shall seem expedient, the whole neighbourhood, to swear, that if any one shall know any heretics there, or any persons holding secret conventicles, or differing

from the ordinary conversation, life, and morals of the faithful, he shall endeavour to point them out to the bishop. But the bishop himself shall convoke the accused into his presence, who, unless they shall clear themselves of the crime alleged against them, or, if after having cleared themselves they shall relapse into their former perfidy; let them be punished according to the canons. But, if any of them, with damnable obstinacy, rejecting the obligation of an oath, shall, perhaps, be unwilling to swear, let them on that very ground be reckoned as heretics.

“ We will, therefore, and command, and in virtue of obedience strictly enjoin, that for the due performance of these things, the bishops shall diligently watch throughout their dioceses, if they wish to escape canonical vengeance ; for if any bishop shall have been negligent, or remiss, in purifying his diocese from the leaven of heretical pravity, when it shall appear by certain proofs, let him be deposed from his episcopal office, and let another fit person be substituted in his place, who may be both willing and able to confound heretical pravity.”

The most cursory perusal of this document can scarcely fail to excite astonishment at the masterly skill with which it is framed in reference to the single object in view : a more detailed examination will reveal such deep thought, contrivance, and perfection of cruel craft as may rarely be met with in the complicated machinery of human crime. Here we see the quarry marked for destruction, surrounded on all sides, pressed closer and closer together in the helplessness of public

exposure ; every possible avenue of escape barred up ; and the victims ready to be singled out successively for destruction at the will of their slaughterers. This canon was no newly-devised plan of de Signi's ; he had acted upon it for a long course of years, with deadly success ; and now, as if conscious that his end was not far distant, he endowed the Church with this rich device, that the mischief might survive him, and prevail against the people of God even to the end of that anti-christian empire which still exists, and gathers daily fresh supplies of vigour, preparing to re-assert its terrible dominion over us.

In the first clause of the canon, we find a reference made to the faith as already set forth as orthodox : this included the whole system of papal abomination ; for though the doctrine of an actual change in the substance of the bread and wine had for some time been enforced as an article of belief, it was this Council that established the monstrous figment, under the newly-coined name of Transubstantiation. All who should question any point of the Romish creed are here denounced as heretics, and at once condemned to be left to the secular power : that is to say, to the common executioner. All the rest provide for their discovery and seizure.

But some may be merely suspected, no proof being adducible of their heresy : these are, on any vague charge or surmise of the sort, to be laid under the curse of the Church, until they prove their innocence, or make their peace by some great gift, proportioned to their means. One year is allowed for this, after which

they become subject to capital punishment ; and every prince, potentate, magistrate, land-owner, all who hold property, or exercise official power, must be bound by a solemn oath to use every effort for the extermination of such heretics within their respective jurisdictions. Temporal lords, under which title are included all the kings and emperors of Christendom, are placed under the surveillance of their metropolitans, to whom is committed the power of excommunicating them, should they show any symptom of reluctance in this exterminating work : if at the year's end the temporal ruler has not given the required satisfaction, by drawing the sword on his own subjects, he is to be reported to the Pope, whose part it is to absolve his people from their allegiance, and to make over his territories to the first invader, who closes with the pontiff's terms. In our day, this menace falls but lightly on the ear ; far different it was in the times of the crusaders—far different it will yet be, if Rome pursues much farther her present unresisted course of aggrandisement.

The temporal lords being thus assured of excommunication, deposition, and utter destruction, should they fail in carrying out to the uttermost the sanguinary will of the Church, we next find, after a short clause assuring eternal life to all who shall make war upon them, how suspected believers in the innocence, receivers and defenders of the persons, and abettors of the deeds of God's people, are to be dealt with. It is of great moment to mark this : they always are, comparatively, a little flock in the midst of an ungodly world, and their security, humanly speaking, lies in the toleration ex-

tended to them by the great mass who themselves are aliens from God, naturally disposed to hate the righteous, but restrained and providentially induced to offer them no harm, or even to embrace their cause, though not on scriptural grounds, when they are assailed by persecution. Such was especially the case with those against whom this atrocious decree was directly pointed in its author's time ; and it is marvellous with what settled purpose, what consummate management, he provides against the contingency. A brother, for instance, not himself walking in the same good way, might feel loth to betray, to denounce, to deliver up to torture and to death, the companion of his infancy, his own mother's son : should he fail to do it, what follows ? on the first suspicion, excommunication ; and after a while, the brand of infamy : suspension from every office, the deprivation of every means of subsistence, inability to bequeath to his children what he may have, or to avail himself of any inheritance that may fall to his lot. In this matter we see the fierce persecuting pope, like a bloodhound on the track, following up his prey with a fiery eagerness that nothing can control. The criminal, the wretch who shall dare to screen his brother from the rack and flame, is to be a spectacle and an abhorrence to all men. He is to be compelled to pay whatever is demanded of him by any profligate claimant, but he cannot sue in a debt, however just ; if a judge, he may not sit ; if an advocate, he may not plead ; if a notary, his instruments are void ; and so of whatsoever calling he may follow. Starvation is his lot. Moreover, those who shall fail to aid in thus

heaping ruin on the heads of the suspected defenders of suspected heretics, are to share their sentence of excommunication ; to be denied the sacraments, without which they believe they cannot possibly be saved ; to have their alms rejected, the purchase-money for heaven ; and when dead, to be cast out as dogs, denied what a Romanist holds so indispensable—Christian burial. Surely the wit of man never devised a more perfect system of frightful espionage. But more is in reserve : full well was the efficacy of a preached Gospel known to its enemies, and so long as men were allowed to set forth a crucified Saviour as the sole hope of the sinner, so long would sinners be found to lay hold on that hope, and to cast away the juggling deceits of Rome. Accordingly, summary punishment was decreed, on a gross perversion of Scripture, to all such teachers : no year's probation being here allowed, but 'suitable,' that is to say, capital, punishment inflicted, unless they immediately repented ; which, of course, could only be manifested by a public recantation of all that they had taught. Then comes the inquisitorial proceeding, soon afterwards carried to such deadly perfection under Dominic and his friars, who, together with the Franciscans, received the confirmation of their establishment from this very council. Under the direction of the prelates, a cordon of spies is drawn round every spot where even by possibility heresy may lurk ; and should any individual hesitate to swear that he will become an informer against his own flesh and blood, he is for that reason to be accounted a heretic himself. One only possible hope seemed to remain for the hunted victim,

and that a very forlorn one ; but while it existed, it must be provided against. So great an anomaly as a merciful man in the office of a Romish prelate could scarcely be looked for ; but if one who was capable of compassionate feelings should be there found, or if God in his goodness touched the heart of a persecutor with compunction, the work might experience some hindrance—the escape of some forlorn believer might be connived at. Accordingly, these higher orders must be reminded that they themselves were but the vassals of ‘the Servant of the servants of God,’ the meek and pious pontiff : and that anything which he, on the report of those secret spies by whom the other spies were surrounded, might construe into negligence, would be visited by the thunders, the terrors of which they well knew ; and involve them in the fate of their appointed victims.

Such was, such IS, the law bequeathed as a legacy by Lotharius de Signi to the Church of which he was the head, and remaining in full force to this day. The papacy considers as its lawful subjects all who have been baptized into the Christian faith, whether they profess allegiance to Rome or not : we, our Queen, our nobles, our countrymen, are all regarded as in a state of prosperous rebellion, fully amenable to these laws, and to be visited with their direst vengeance whenever Protestantism becomes the weaker party. Meanwhile, we will continue our narrative, and endeavour to show with what fatal efficacy the system wrought its cruel purpose against the half-reviving Church of Christ in the district of Languedoc. We left them,

indeed, in a state of seeming extinction, but the wily Pope judged rightly when he foresaw, in the dim future, new spectres rising, and fresh victims ready to yield their lives up for the testimony of Jesus ; and against them, to the end of time, he thus prepared a machinery of destruction.

We have already noticed that, lamentable, and seemingly complete, as was the overthrow of the Church of Christ in the country of the Albigeois, it pleased God that a temporary revival should take place, ere the light was utterly extinguished. The Council of Lateran had, as we have seen, laboured to turn once more the torrent of crusading violence towards Palestine, which, for various causes, was a more convenient field whither to dispatch their vassal-kings and armies. At the same time, they heard and discussed an appeal from Count Raymond, who urgently pleaded his cause, and besought the restitution of his rightful possessions. Some favour was shown to him, but de Montfort's usurpation of his principal titles and dominions was confirmed ; thus rendering the sanguinary conqueror doubly secure in his position. It was to this, principally, that the re-appearance of true religion in places whence it seemed to have been wholly and finally exiled, might be traced. De Montfort and Arnold renewed their contest for the sovereignty of Narbonne, in the spirit of men who have only to divide the spoil, fearing no farther bar to their acquisitions. The Count forcibly planted his standard of authority in Narbonne ; the Archbishop excommunicated him ; de Montfort laughed

at his ban, and threw down his fortifications ; and in this way the several parties became so occupied, and found so much for their respective followers to do, that the persecuted church lifted up its head again in the wilderness, which, spiritually at least, began to rejoice and to blossom as the rose, before the divided enemy had leisure to cast a look towards it. Such as were of the army, of course flocked round the standards to which they were attached : the warlike Archbishop did not lack adherents of this caste ; nor was the excommunicated layman without a zealous band of ecclesiastical partizans, some goaded on by envy of Arnold's high exaltation, and resentment at his intolerable pride ; others allured by the good things that de Montfort held in his gift. The disunion was general ; while the third party, the rightful lords of what these robbers were fighting over, secretly strengthened the hands of their loyal retainers, prepared to take advantage of any favorable turn in the current of events.

It was then that, filled with holy zeal, the teachers who had been driven from their flocks returned to look after those few sheep in the wilderness who had hitherto hidden themselves, but now ventured to come forth at the shepherd's well-known voice. Then might be seen the father of those fair twin girls, the smile of pleasure on his lip, the tear of fond regret, not unmixed with remorse, trembling in his eye, and the lurking shade of watchful doubt yet lingering on his countenance as the frequent, rapid glance sought the entrance-door, listening with deep attention to the pathetic exhortations of the now welcomed preacher, as he set before the children

the preciousness of those truths for which their mother had died. How changed in the expression of those young faces, since they importuned the seeming pedlar for a sight of his glittering wares ! Humble, thoughtful, earnest, and full of deepest reverence, their countenance bespeak emotions that the teacher confidently trusts have been excited by the Holy Spirit ; and he doubts not but that, if tribulation and persecution should again arise because of the word, the rescued lambs before him, and their heart-smitten father, will be found confessing before men Him whom they were taught in earliest infancy to love, as the gracious friend of little children, and to whom they now come, with a better understanding of the blessed privilege, to take his yoke upon them, and to learn of him.

Many a lowly cottage displayed some similar scene ; and in mansions of more lordly aspect admission was sometimes found for the way-faring instructor of former days, and more than connived at by those in authority. The latter instances were, however, less frequent : the principal work was carried on in rural districts, or in the more obscure quarters of such towns as were not occupied by the enemy's forces. In every place, it appeared that God had still a remnant to be summoned out of Great Babylon, and wheresoever even in the soul of one of the humblest peasants or artizans a good work had been begun, there, we well know, the Lord would finish it. Kings and their mailed armies, prelates with their far more formidable hosts of cowed priests, were but unconscious instruments, carrying out the ends that were of God appointed, and which they

especially laboured to defeat ; even de Montfort and Arnold Amalric were now uniting in the strange work of reviving the gospel, by attracting the attention and engaging the services of those who should have been employed in watching against the dreaded heresy instead of taking arms respectively on behalf of the knight and the priest.

Sweet it was, and deeply, awfully solemn, the re-assembling of some scattered little congregation in their secret nook of meeting, around the teacher whom they never again expected to see : some scarcely even daring to desire it. There were vacant places in those assemblages, the former occupants of which had ascended from the blazing fires of martyrdom to their prepared seats in heaven ; and never had the union been so perfect, never had the communion been so deeply realized between the militant and the triumphant church, as now that the father lifted his tearful eyes from the place where formerly sat his listening child, the husband from that where the wife of his bosom once reclined, the loving daughter from the seat on which long rested her revered parent, to seek that heaven, that holy city, the New Jerusalem, as yet too far above the reach of mortal ken, there to recognize, as it were, the form so long beloved on earth ; with the delicious assurance in their souls concerning them, "They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more, neither shall the sun light on them nor any heat. But the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them to fountains of living waters ; and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes."

It was thus that many a weak hand was strengthened, many a feeble knee confirmed, and many a wandering foot brought back to the straight path of sanctified suffering, leading to eternal glory. Some there were, who, like Esau, might have been tempted to sell their heavenly birthright, if not for a fair mess of the world's attractive pottage, yet for present security from sufferings that flesh feels it very hard to brave: these had the glorious reality of unseen and eternal things so vividly set before them, combined with the certainty that some whom they had dearly loved were even then actually partaking in the blessedness described, that it became a wonder to themselves how they could ever have thought of compromising or of concealing the faith wherein they stood; and martyrdom in any shape was a welcome prospect, seeing to what it formed the vista. It was the seed-time of a second harvest, which the Lord prepared to gather into his garner.

It may be asked by what means were the hated heretics secured from the vigilant proceedings of those who had long lain in wait for them? It must be remembered that these harmless people of God were in reality hated by none but the wolves of Rome. Their neighbours and countrymen had always acted towards them with the utmost forbearance, amounting indeed to open, unequivocal, encouragement; and it was only by visiting these with the most tremendous punishments for such connivance, that they were reluctantly induced to withdraw their countenance from men whom they secretly revered. They became spies only under the consciousness that other spies surrounded them, eager

to make their supposed or presumed defection a means of seizing on what little was left to them of their native possessions ; if not of bringing their lives into peril. They knew nothing experimentally of the transforming power of the religion, the exterior loveliness of which they could not but admire ; nor saw any great harm in compelling its professors to disguise their real principles, while their avowal exposed both parties alike to danger. It was, therefore, a friendly, and a half-reluctant coercion that the class in question, the natives and citizens of the provinces, exercised over the small company of believers still left among them ; and no marvel if they speedily relaxed in their uncongenial employment, when they saw the attention of the more dreaded party, the clergy, their retainers, and the strangers brought into the land by the crusade, so completely engrossed by the contest of de Montfort with the Archbishop, as to leave them little leisure and less inclination to trouble themselves with what they believed to be not only a conquered but an exterminated foe.

By such means did the Lord revive his work in the poor persecuted church of the Albigenses ; but it was only for the bringing to glory of all his elect in that place. He saw fit to deliver his saints into the power of the Beast, and the present breathing-time was but preparatory to the great sacrifice still to be made to the papal Baal.

The first movement towards a renewal of the horrors of war was made by the son of Count Raymond. The Council of Lateran had conceded to these two princes a portion of their ancient dominions, not including Tou-

louse, which with other possessions to a vast extent was confirmed to de Montfort. Young Raymond conceived himself to have obtained at parting the sanction of the pope to an attempt for the recovery of his inheritance by reconquest ; nor is it at all unlikely that the pontiff was heartily acquiescent in the matter, for he saw the whole country in danger of being contested by two men, one of whom, though the sworn champion of the Church, was in arms against that branch of it located in his own territory ; and the other, albeit an ecclesiastic of most fanatic character, had become little short of an open rebel against Rome, in the eager pursuit of worldly aggrandisement. Innocent III. could not fail to see how favourable to the exhausted flock of Christ such a pause must be ; and since the two Raymonds had made unbounded submission to the Church, giving every possible guarantee for their future obedience in whatsoever the Vatican might decree, it could not but be desirable to see such a third party in the field, to startle the others, and to revive their dormant zeal against heresy ; especially as the pope well knew he could at pleasure crush again the unhappy house of Raymond.

Thus encouraged, Raymond the younger, who was then barely nineteen years old, took the field at the head of an army which was raised as in a moment by his welcome summons ; and so successful was his opening campaign, that De Montfort, roused from his security, saw the peril at once. His experienced tactics, however, proved too much for the ardent young commander, whom he prevailed on to conclude a truce with

him before he had heard the tidings already communicated to De Montfort,—that Toulouse had thrown off the yoke of the usurper, openly proclaiming their lawful and still beloved sovereign, Raymond VI., who, while his son engaged the enemy at home, had raised an army in the northern provinces of Spain, and was rapidly marching at their head towards his ancient capital. But Simon having so far outwitted the son, advanced with his whole collected force to meet the father ; and Raymond, the newly-sworn bondsman of Rome, had not courage to face him : his army dispersed themselves at once ; and De Montfort marched on to take vengeance on Toulouse.

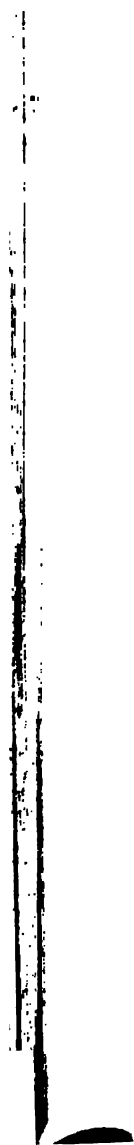
All the writers of that period, and of the Romish creed in general, agree in describing Toulouse as the very hot-bed of heresy : and we have seen, in the earlier part of this narrative, how openly, generously, and firmly its citizens upheld the cause of the assailed flock. Their treatment of Bishop Fouquet, too, will be remembered : too well was it remembered by that blood-thirsty priest on the present occasion ! It appears probable that, from motives of policy, De Montfort might have acted with a show of forbearance towards this noble and powerful city ; but Fouquet, as his own historians boast, prevailed with his merciless counsels over the dictates of a wiser policy ; and having gained his point with the commander, he re-entered the city, addressing the deluded people as a flock for whom he tenderly cared ; and appealing to the Most High in attestation of the perfect sincerity in which he sought to insure their safety, he prevailed on a small company of the

most considerable citizens to repair to the general, to make submission in the name of the rest, and to promise allegiance for the future. He positively guaranteed to them a favourable reception and indulgent hearing ; and thus assured they went forth to the camp, where De Montfort, at Fouquet's suggestion, had prepared heavy fetters of iron, with which they were immediately loaded. The first party had not long been gone, when Fouquet induced another, of equal rank, to follow, for the purpose of seconding their plea. These were in like manner loaded with chains ; and by the crafty wickedness of this unprincipled man, above eighty of the first nobles and gentlemen of Toulouse had been delivered into De Montfort's merciless hands, before the treachery was discovered. Satisfied that their embassy was successful, the citizens proceeded in larger numbers to tender their submission, when they met a townsman who had escaped before the irons could be placed on him, and thus became acquainted with the infamous device. The whole city flew to arms, determined to defend themselves to the last ; but a number of De Montfort's soldiers had already gained entrance, no doubt by Fouquet's means, into the city ; and every savage excess that could be perpetrated against the most defenceless class of its inhabitants had been carried on in the more remote and least populous parts of the town, to an appalling extent before any check could be given to their atrocities. They were at length put to the sword, or driven forth ; and Simon himself heading the flower of his mounted knights, was thrice repulsed with great slaughter in three several attacks on as many

bodies of the gallant citizens. The threat, however, of putting to instant death his eighty prisoners, produced a greater impression than his arms could do, on the Toulousians: and here again Fouquet interposed, bringing with him another ecclesiastic of note, and both pledging their most solemn oath before God, that if the citizens yielded to the terms proposed by De Montfort, their brethren should be restored to liberty, their rights confirmed, and their personal safety secured. Little as was the reliance to be placed on the oaths of such men, still as no possible hope existed of saving their friends, or, in the end, their city, from the terrible vengeance of the great crusader, they at last agreed to the terms, which included the laying down of their arms, and delivering up every stronghold to Simon's forces. This done, the faith was kept with them that Rome boasts of keeping with heretics: all their principal men were seized, fettered, and sent, together with the former eighty victims, to perish miserably in the dungeons of various castles, occupied by De Montfort. After executing such vengeance as his own cruel will, and the equally savage bishop, suggested, on the disarmed and helpless citizens, he laid on them a fine, which was sure to reduce the wealthiest to indigence, and left them with a menace, that if such imposition was not strictly paid, their city should be given to the flames, and a general massacre sweep its inhabitants from the earth.

To what extent the Albigenses, as believers, suffered in these transactions, we have no record; but as Fouquet was the presiding genius of the persecution, we may be well assured that he selected for destruction as

many as he could. Wheresoever the name of Christ was honoured, and the dark apostacy rejected, there he would certainly point the sword, though it does not appear that on this occasion the fires of martyrdom were rekindled. The Toulousians were treated rather as rebels against Simon de Montfort than against the Pope ; and the affair proves how quickly De Montfort was merging the character of the Church's champion in that of the martial plunderer and temporal prince. Yet he carefully maintained his claim to the former distinction ; and it was but a short time previous to these events that he had made a progress, to do homage to the king of France, during the whole of which, little short of divine honours were paid him, alike by kings and prelates, as the anointed leader and defender of what they most impiously designated the armies and the cause of the Lord of hosts.



CHAPTER SEVENTH.

CONCLUSION.



CHAPTER VII.

CONCLUSION.

THE events of several years succeeding that of the memorable Council of Lateran, afford us no clue by which to trace the footsteps of the flock, beyond such glimmerings as we have noticed, of an unextinguished light existing amid the thick darkness. Those years were marked by much stirring incident in the world : the Eastern Crusades revived in all their original enthusiasm, completely drawing off public attention from the devastated provinces where Simon de Montfort struggled to retain what his cruel violence had grasped ; and where Fouquet and his unprincipled associates still kept up the war-cry of ' Heresy,' as a pretext for aiding the sanguinary conqueror. The career of the latter, was, however, near its close : already had the terrible and wily enemy of Christ's Church been called from the seat of his supreme earthly dominion to appear before that Jesus whom he had so fiercely persecuted, and to render an account of his evil deeds. Innocent

III. was cut off in the prime and pride of life, leaving to another, perhaps not less willing, but certainly less able hand, the task of wearing out and destroying the saints of the Most High ; and the extinction of that master-spirit was felt throughout the world, as an event that must needs change the general aspect. To de Montfort, the pretended servant of the papacy, who in reality served none but himself, it mattered little who ruled in the Vatican, so long as he had an army of good fighting men under his command ; but there is no doubt that the removal of their pontifical oppressor produced an exhilarating effect on the Languedocians, and on their chiefs. The Count of Foix in particular was strongly suspected of holding the doctrines that Rome most abhors ; and his wife openly professed them ; but the character of a religious war had been well nigh lost sight of, nothing but the fanaticism of the ecclesiastica keeping alive its semblance.

Toulouse, exasperated by the perfidy and barbarity it had recently experienced at the hands of Simon, received once more its ancient lord, Raymond, with a fixed determination of upholding his rights. It was not long before powerful reinforcements were poured into the city, headed by the principal chiefs and nobles of the surrounding territories ; so that Simon was compelled to hasten with all speed, in his wonted assurance of being able to put down every opposition by the strength of his arm. His troops, however, contained many who had enrolled themselves only to escape suspicion and consequent destruction, and these immediately deserted him for the standards of their respective chiefs. Not a

few of his mercenary soldiers, panic-struck at this unexpected turn of affairs, abruptly left him also ; and it was with a diminished host, though partially strengthened by a junction with his brother Guy, that he approached the walls of Toulouse, ere yet the eager citizens had completed their rebuilding and the repairs of their ruined fortifications. Against them, de Montfort put in practice his utmost skill, power, and persevering resolution, but in vain. Many months were passed in pressing a hopeless siege, and in making assaults that were always repulsed with severe loss to the assailants ; until matters became so critical that Fouquet hastened into France to preach up a new crusade : and Simon, dispatching his Countess to solicit aid from Philip Augustus, himself made a very urgent appeal to the Vatican. It was, indeed, become necessary to rekindle the old embers of religious persecution into a blaze, in order to preserve to him the prize that he had proudly thought his own.

But before the result of these applications could be known, the vengeance of God overtook the criminal. With his usual show of pious zeal, he was attending the service of the Church on the 25th of June, 1218, when news was brought to him there that the besieged had made a sally and taken his favorite machine, "the cat," which they were destroying by fire. Mass was then being celebrated, and he remained till the moment when the wafer was elevated, to which the monstrous dogma of transubstantiation had been formally affixed by the Lateran Council ; then blasphemously perverting the language of Scripture, he loudly exclaimed, " Lord,

now lettest thy servant depart in peace ! for mine eyes have seen thy salvation ;" and with this awful testimony to his idolatrous belief, he left the Church, to superintend the retaking of the murderous machine. In this he succeeded ; but at the same moment a ponderous stone cast from the walls, smote the defyer of the living God on the forehead, and laid him low in death.

It was not till after a month's protracted, but fruitless efforts to carry the siege to a successful termination, that Amaury de Montfort took up his father's corpse, and bore it over the blood-stained track of his long advance, to that memorable spot, Carcassonne, where the young and noble Count Raymond Roger had been ensnared by treachery and committed to the hands of one who, after a long and dreary imprisonment in a dungeon, ended by murdering him. Hither the grim and ghastly body was brought in all the mingled pomp and pride of military and regal parade ; and when at the last day of awful judgment the graves are opened and earth and sea yield up their dead, from the crumbling fragments of Carcassonne will come forth the wretched Simon de Montfort.

His character and his career were, indeed, most fearfully pre-eminent in guilt. The wild enthusiasm of the age, that really thought to do God service by slaying his saints, the chivalrous spirit that loved to conquer for conquest's sake, and courted the plaudits that formed the victor's proudest meed, these belonged not to de Montfort. Dark, stern, cold, selfish, calculating, and with that revolting peculiarity which distinguishes

some few beasts of prey, the wanton prolongation of the victim's sufferings, while the monster gloats over its pangs, he stood comparatively alone, supreme in cruelty, where all were cruel ; and never was he known to yield his own savage will, save when some prompter, like Fouquet, suggested a refinement of treachery and barbarity beyond what he had himself conceived. The selection of such a man to bear the title of the Church's most trusted and most favoured champion, speaks volumes as to what that Church itself must have been ; while imagination shrinks from pursuing the track of his blood-stained course, rending, mangling, and destroying without mercy old and young, the grey-haired sire of successive generations, and the helpless babe of yesterday ; the true worshipper of God, and the loyal slave of Rome who dared to cast a look of compassion on his more enlightened brother ; ay, and the undoubted devotee of that very religion for which Simon professed to combat, if by including him under the common charge of heresy, the plunderer might destroy him, and seize on his inheritance. We cannot follow such a wretch as this to his final account : we can but ponder on the fearful truth that such, in its unrestrained workings, is the Mystery of Iniquity ; such the character of that Great Babylon on whom vengeance will ere long fall ; and from the contemplation gather fresh energy for the re-iterated call, " Come out of her my people ! be ye not partakers of her sins, that ye receive not of her plagues."

Amaury de Montfort, determined to retain what his father had won, exerted himself effectually, alike at the

Court of Rome and that of France, to obtain the needful assistance for another crusade ; of course on the old pretext of extirpating heresy, but in reality to attack and to slay the native possessors of a soil over which he desired to reign supreme ; and who, though perfectly sincere in their allegiance to the papacy, still preferred the mild rule of their rightful and half-enlightened lords to the sway of a bigot, dark, fierce, and pitiless, as they had good reason to fear a de Montfort must be. This expedition was headed by Prince Louis of France, as a meritorious service before God ; and very many were the lives sacrificed of those whom we cannot number with the saints, the objects of the war made by the Beast, in the person of Innocent III. The castle of Marmaude was an important post, and to this the crusaders laid siege, until the inhabitants offered to capitulate, and Prince Louis willingly granted them permission to leave the place in safety, rejecting the counsel of the Bishop of Saintes, that he should seize, burn, and otherwise slay the whole body, civil, and military, as heretics and apostates. But what the French prince could not bring himself to perpetrate, was done by hands more experienced in the work of treachery and slaughter. While a few of the principal chiefs and knights were going through the form of surrendering themselves in the tent of Louis, Amaury de Montfort, at the head of his troops, privately entered the unguarded city, where of five thousand inhabitants, of all ages and conditions, they left not one alive. Every man, woman, and child, was butchered before Louis could interpose to stay the work of death. He expressed displeasure ; but it was

not for a mere secular prince to condemn what had been done under ecclesiastical sanction ; and leaving the reeking heap of carnage to send up to heaven its fearful cry against them, the crusaders prepared once more to assault Toulouse. They were further encouraged to this attempt by the publicly recorded oath of the pope's legate, who had solemnly sworn, 'that in the said Toulouse should remain neither man, woman, boy, nor girl, but that all should be put to death, without sparing any, old or young ; and that in all the city there should not remain one stone upon another, but all should be demolished and thrown down.' This pious oath, by the immediate representative of infallibility, infused new courage into the crusaders, and excited no small dread in the bosom of the miserable Count Raymond, who continued fast bound in the chains of superstition, pursuing his anomalous course of unbounded submission to the spiritual thralldom of Rome ; and protection, so far as it still existed to be protected, to what she denounces it an unpardonable sin even to tolerate. Still Raymond had many brave and faithful allies, who threw reinforcements into the city in great abundance ; while the devotion of magistrates, burgesses, and people to their hereditary ruler and his son was unbounded. No sign of intimidation appeared, but the boldest preparations for a vigorous defence ; and after some able but fruitless attempts to carry a part of the outworks, Prince Louis with the remains of his army, gladly retired ; accompanied not only by the disappointed Amaury de Montfort, but also by the legate, Bertrand, whose pious vow was baffled as effectually as that of the

devotees of old, who were sworn "neither to eat or drink till they had slain Paul."

But where, during this while, were those who in life and doctrine were followers of Paul, even as he followed Christ? They were still scattered about the provinces, taking advantage of the temporary diversion of their merciless foes from the work of direct persecution; confirming each other in the faith, and deriving new strength to resist alike the allurements and the terrors of Rome, from what they had beheld of the practical workings of that cruelly fierce and anti-christian spirit, which stands in every point opposed to the peace and love of the gospel. Gradually, the number of those who had still lingered in their native vallies decreased more and more. Asylums were found in other lands, where compassion for their unparalleled sufferings, respect for their blameless characters, and not unfrequently a happy curiosity to learn the particulars of a faith that bore such fruits, inclined the inhabitants to receive and to shelter them. In this way was the seed of divine truth spread far abroad, even by the same wind that prostrated the parent tree on its native soil; and to the teaching of those expatriated confessors of Provence may be directly traced the germ that appeared in its maturity in the persons of John Huss, and Jerome of Prague.

It was in 1219 that the last hope of Amaury de Montfort was baffled before the walls of Toulouse; and in the interval that succeeded, an appearance of revival gladdened the hearts of many who had remained at or returned to their former posts. It is on record, that in

1222, a sort of convocation of the Albigensic Church was held in Razez, where upwards of a hundred of their principal men assembled, and in some measure re-organized the dispersed body, by again appointing preachers and instructors for the several departments, where the flames of martyrdom had consumed together both pastors and flocks ; a few fragments of the latter only remaining to be now re-gathered into their beloved fold. Beyond this, we have no authority for stating any particulars respecting the Albigensic believers : if they left any written documents, they would ultimately fall into the hands of the exterminating Inquisition, subsequently established in that wretched country under the fierce followers of Dominic ; and it is not to be supposed that such dangerous papers would escape the flames kindled for their authors. The opposite party, of course, had nothing to tell, for they knew nothing ; or we should have it before us in such exulting annals of martyrdom as Peter de Vaux Cernay supplies up to the death of his patron, Simon de Montfort, with whose career his work closes. We can only in imagination follow the quiet course of those who had always found it right for the sake of their kind, tolerating neighbours, to worship in comparative secrecy ; and who now on their own account no less than theirs, avoided all open manifestation of the partial revival, beyond what was necessary for the right ordering of their Church. Most absurd reports were circulated, even on this slender foundation ; even to the assertion that the heretics had, in another kingdom, elected a pope of their own, in opposition to him at Rome ; but to this no one can give

credit. Even at the comparatively numerous convocations already alluded to, only three new preachers were ordained, which, considering how lamentably the number of teachers had been diminished by fire and the sword, starvation and exile, sadly proclaims the yet more diminished state of the recovered flock.

Matters went on in this way for the space of several years, even to 1226, before the torch of desolating war was rekindled in the unhappy provinces. Long before that period Raymond VI. died ; exhibiting to the last the most servile devotion to Popery ; sustaining the character of a broken-hearted penitent towards the enemy who had so relentlessly persecuted him ; and clearly proving how far he was from having received the life-giving rays of that light which, nevertheless, he had long protected and favoured. It must be said of him that he deliberately chose darkness rather than light ; for both were before him ; the latter in its purest radiance, shining amid the agonies of many cruel deaths : the former in the depth of its most hideous blackness, with its unmasked horrors evermore crossing his path.

Raymond VII. had exercised the powers of government in his father's name, for some time, before death removed the old Count from the scene of vicissitude and woe where he had long been a prominent actor. This youthful prince showed himself less conscientious towards his subjects than his father had done : for not only were his protestations of devoted fidelity to the Papacy constantly renewed ; but he repeatedly declared his readiness to seek out, to seize, and to punish with the utmost severity that Rome could desire, all who

held the better faith. It availed him little, however ; for in 1226, at the head of fifty thousand horsemen, and an altogether innumerable force, sanctioned by the Pope's blessing, accompanied by his legate, and by the veteran traitor and homicide, Fouquet, bishop of Toulouse, (by the Toulousians themselves called the Bishop of Devils,) we find the King of France, Louis VIII., engaged in a vigorous crusade against the heretics of Albigeois—in reality, to deprive his powerful vassal-counts of their possessions, and to secure in his own grasp what had been the grand prize aimed at by Simon de Montfort.

In the month of June, the king laid siege to the splendid city of Avignon, pressing it with all his forces, during three months unsuccessfully. He is stated to have lost, by pestilence and the sword, twenty thousand men in those three months ; and when at last the place capitulated, it was on terms such as had often been granted, but never before kept by conquering crusaders. In this case, the articles were observed ; and the enormous sacrifice of life, including the hastening on of the king's own death, brought no real advantage to the invaders, although the verbal submission of all the Languedocian nobles was secured by the intimidation produced. But the object of this holy war was well nigh baffled altogether ; for not a single heretic could be found throughout the country which they traversed, though Fouquet put forth all his energies, and the king all his zeal in the search. At length they found at Cannes, near Narbonne, an aged preacher of the Gospel, named Peter Isarn, whose infirmities having disabled

him from flight, he had secreted himself until the diligence of Fouquet discovered and dragged him forth. With exulting ceremony, they brought the venerable minister to a mock trial ; and publicly burned him as an acceptable offering, if not to the God of heaven, to the foul spirit that delights in making herself " drunk with the blood of His saints."

From the wide battle-field so long deluged with blood, the principal combatants had passed away. Simon de Montfort mouldered on a spot defiled and devastated by his crimes ; and the unburied corpse of Raymond VI., for which no efforts, no supplications, no lowliness of submission on the part of his son could obtain the privilege of burial from the vindictive Church of Rome, presented a monument of unavailing, because inconsistent, adherence to a better cause. Of the great army brought into Languedoc by the French king, it might be said, as of the Assyrians of old, that they

untouched by the sword,

Had melted like snow at the breath of the Lord.

The monarch himself died very shortly after his parting exploit of committing to the flames the hoary head, and palsied limbs of Christ's solitary martyr, Peter Isarn ; and while another new occupant was busied in settling himself on the throne of the Vatican, and a light-minded, intriguing Queen Regent took the reigns of French government into her unpractised hand, it might be supposed that the drooping tree of the Lord's planting among the Provençals would once more revive, lift its head, and extend its branches. But, alas ! the wild boar

had wounded it too deeply for such a revival to take place ; and very few, and very feeble, and far-dispersed asunder, were the remnants of what had once formed so fair and promising a Church. The very pretext of seeking out heretics became scarcely available ; and though Blanche, who now governed for the youthful son of Louis, dispatched a fresh armament against the Count of Toulouse, still nominally to extirpate heresy, it would have been difficult for them to give the semblance of a religious crusade to the expedition, had not those two veteran soldiers of the Evil One, Arnold Amalric and Fouquet, personally assisted in the campaign. The castle of Bécède was taken ; the garrison put to the sword ; and Fouquet had the joy of discovering within the conquered walls a faithful Albigensic pastor, named Girard de la Mote, with a little flock gathered about him. They would have fallen undistinguished in the general slaughter, but the bishop rushed in to their rescue ; and when the work of blood was finished, he proceeded to the still more congenial work of fire. The whole party were solemnly arraigned as heretics, condemned, and with every ceremonial that could give additional zest to the scene, burnt alive. Carried back in imagination to those times, and looking, as it were, on the horrible cruelties perpetrated by men who made it their brightest merit and highest glory to revel in the death-throes of their unresisting victims, we must feel the glow of natural indignation, heightened by the knowledge that they did these things in the name, and professedly by the authority, and to the honour and praise of the Lord Jesus Christ, whom they thus persecuted, and

daily crucified afresh by their enormous crimes ; but passing on from the past to the present, remembering the awful fact that these murderers are even now in a state of real, conscious existence, and anticipating the final doom which our own ears will hear pronounced upon them, while our own eyes survey their forms, called forth—terrible thought ! to “the resurrection of damnation ;” we may well merge all other feelings in that of trembling adoration, as the question appeals to our hearts, “Who made thee to differ ?” On the other hand, we know that the spirits of the martyrs are with Him who first suffered unto death for them ; and while they stand rejoicing before his throne, the language of their blessed experience is, “Our light afflictions, which were but for a moment, have wrought out for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.”

Very beautiful is the country where all these scenes of blood took place. The hand of God had decked it with mountain and valley, hill, grove, and plain. Rich vineyards mantled the graceful slopes, turning their purple clusters to the ripening sunbeam ; golden harvests waved, and bright green pastures stretched away where the open plain prolonged its level, watered by rivers, of which the perpetual supplies came bubbling down the rocks, and widened as they ran into new channels. Castles of gigantic size, throwing out their fortifications to an immense extent, crowned by dark woods, while their site, frequently, was on the summit of a precipitous rock, were in keeping with the grandeur of the natural scenery ; though, alas ! the jealous care with which every part was rendered available for

defensive warfare bespoke the constant expectation of some outburst of man's enmity against his brother man ; and told how far the kingdoms of this world still were from having become the kingdom of our God and of his Christ. Yet, overshadowed as they were by the martial piles of their warlike lords, the simple dwellings of the lowly wore an aspect of conscious security and peace. The twining flower-stem threw its graceful arms round the rustic porch, and climbed the roof, and laughed in at the little casement ; its lesser kindred spread their many-coloured forms of beauty on the ground below, intermingled with herb and vegetable, and fruit-bearing bush, with scarcely the defensive precaution of a few light stakes to mark the boundary where none were expected to intrude. Nor was the peace, in numerous cases, such as results from outward safety and tranquillity alone : in very many of those rural habitations dwelt the true son of a true peace, such as the world has not to give—such as the world can never, in life or in death, take away. That peace rested on the heads and in the hearts of the cottage dwellers, while they looked round on a landscape radiant with smiles, and undreading the approach of a hostile step. It rested there, when the land that had been as the garden of Eden became a waste wilderness ; when the protecting fortress was dismantled, and turned to a heap of smoking, blackened ruins ; when the soil, up-torn and trampled down again, became a pestilential admixture of corrupting flesh and congealed blood, and decomposed vegetable ruin : when the youthful son of many prayers and hopes fell a mangled corpse

before the entrance of the dwelling which he vainly sought to guard with his wounded body, and the crash of ruin bespoke the utter demolition of that frail tenement whence the son of peace was at length ejected : but how ? and whither went he ? Bound and fettered and scourged along the hideous road, now foul with death ; his matron partner, and his blooming daughters, with raiment torn, and hair dishevelled, and shoulders laid bare to the quickening thong, dragging their bruised limbs after him, the son of peace proceeded on his way, satisfied that as was the Lord, so must His people be in this world, and neither daunted nor discouraged on his path of sorrow, sanctified as was every step thereof by the footprint of the great Forerunner.

They have reached the camp ; and in a lordly tent sits the appointed vicegerent of him who usurps a throne in the nominal temple of God. A dense company surround him, of bishops and priests, and all the ecclesiastical orders of Rome, clad after the pattern seen by John in the wilderness, in scarlet, and gold, and gems of dazzling lustre, such as their queen was decked in. An outer circle enclose this mitred and cowled company, of fierce warriors, whose burnished armour, flashing back the light amid the wild and graceful confusion of silken scarfs and waving plumage of every imaginable dye, add grandeur to the terrors of the scene. Who else is there ? The son of peace is there ; a most unwonted guest in that gorgeous company ! The poor peasant stands before the haughty prelate who wields pontifical authority, defiled with dust and blood, and pale with the anguish that cries out from the overbur-

dened heart, "Save me from this hour!" yet, calm in the inseparable adjunct, so dear to the child of God, "Nevertheless not my will but thine be done!" Close behind him, close as wanton tyranny will permit them to press, stand the gentle objects of his earthly love, endeared by the tie that death cannot sever. He is questioned concerning his hope: he declares it to be wholly centred in Jesus who died upon the cross for sinners: he is asked of his faith in the power of the so-called church; in the authority of her priests to absolve from sin and to save a soul alive, or to bind that soul in chains that Omnipotence cannot break; he is asked of his confidence in the merits and intercessory efficiency of dead women and dead men; and, finally, he is required to submit himself to the Roman Church, as of divine authority; to bow down and adore a consecrated cake, as the very Jesus, the All-sufficient Saviour whom he has just confessed.

To each and all of these queries and demands, he returns a calm, firm negative; striving at the same time to set forth the grounds of his scriptural dissent: but experience had taught the persecutors the impolicy of suffering the truth to be heard; and with fierce clamour they condemn him to the burning flames. A shorter interrogation suffices with the women; it is enough that his faith is theirs, his hope, his joyous readiness to suffer: and the son of peace passes out, to ascend the pile already prepared by eager hands, well accustomed to the task, and perfectly aware that a victim once seized was already condemned, even though proof should fail that he had ever borne the brand of heresy.

The flames ascend ; the priests in awful mockery of God chaunt their *jubilate* round the scene of death ; and warriors clash their shields and wave their banners, in joyous accompaniment, while the curling smoke ever and anon dividing affords them a glimpse of what is within. The son of peace is there : the Prince of peace is there also, invisible to man, but, oh, how sensibly present to His suffering yet rejoicing servants, now in the act of putting off the scorched tabernacles of their mortal bodies, and to join the noble army of martyrs, resting in the abodes of everlasting peace.

Persecution and affliction are not the necessary portion either of a church or of an individual believer. The Lord assigns the lot that He sees best suited to the circumstances in which he has placed them. Even under heathen rule, and in the midst of many adversaries, there was a period of which it could be recorded, "Then had the churches rest throughout all Judea, and Galilee, and Samaria ;" and instead of any declension attending this peaceful state, we read, that they "were edified ; and walking in the fear of the Lord, and in the comfort of the Holy Ghost, were multiplied." In like manner, it sometimes pleases God to add outward prosperity and domestic happiness, unalloyed by any great drawback, to the spiritual blessings wherewith he enriches his children ; until, perhaps, the doubting soul makes a cross of the absence of crosses, asking, 'Can I be living godly in Christ Jesus, while I suffer no persecution !' These are exceptions indeed to a general rule, but they should excite no misgivings : it often seems good to the Lord to try our faith and humi-

lity and love, by prosperity as well as by adversity ; and perhaps it is the harder trial of the two.

A single believer in an ungodly, dissipated family ; a pious man, obliged to abide among scoffers, as a soldier in a regiment, or a sailor in a ship ; a little flock of true Christians walking consistently with their profession in a church where spiritual life is otherwise extinct, and where the rulers are not faithful to their trust ; these must indeed look for persecution as severe as the restraining power of Protestant toleration will allow ; and where the religion of the Bible is gradually giving way to a religion of forms and ceremonies, vain traditions and unwarranted assumptions, we may be assured that the hour is not far off when such toleration shall cease to exist, together with the root that bears it. In the case of the afflicted Albigenes, the sure word of prophecy had foretold their delivery into the power of the Beast, and his successful war upon them ; but it is probable that very few among them possessed, and fewer still applied to themselves, what had been revealed to the apostle John. It was enough for them that God had shown them the all-sufficiency of the one great sacrifice offered on the cross ; and the Holy Spirit strengthened them to stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ had made them free, resisting unto death the entanglements of that yoke of bondage which would have enslaved them to a system utterly opposed to the truth of the gospel—a mystery of iniquity, the direful workings of which they beheld on all sides ; not only in the profligate lives of its ministers, and the hardened sinfulness of its votaries, but in the deeds of blood and savage cruelty

perpetrated under its direct sanction, as a rendering unto God of most acceptable service.

The land was now again thrown out of cultivation ; for war had once more burst upon its borders, and it was well known that Blanche of Castille, the queen-mother of France, had promised to put a finishing hand to the work of her predecessors. The young Count Raymond was beforehand with her ; after the affair of Bécède, which was all that the last invasion had accomplished, he took the field with a considerable army, met the enemy's forces, obtained a decisive victory, and gave the most conclusive proof of the extirpation of what was called heresy among his followers by practising the most barbarous cruelties on his prisoners, who were mutilated and tortured to death by the victors. A second successful battle was followed by the same atrocities, giving evidence that even the restraining influence formerly exercised by the presence of true Christians among the troops was withdrawn, and that the spirit of revenge had taken place of that noble devotion to a better cause which once characterized the Toulousians. A thousand piles of burning faggots, heaped with martyred Albigenses, would not have afforded to Rome such a triumph as did these cruelties of a successful foe : in the former case, she could but kill the body, and after that had no more that she could do : in the latter, she saw her own venom infused into the soul, and the victims were her's and the dragon's for ever.

The signal punishment which followed these acts on the part of men who could not plead ignorance of better

things, was a finishing blow to the wars of many years. Here again we meet with the indefatigable emissary of Satan, Fouquet, who encouraged Humbert de Beaujeu, the commander over whose troops Raymond had achieved these deeply-tarnished conquests, to advance upon Toulouse with a powerful reinforcement of crusaders, brought together by the strenuous efforts of the bishops and preaching-brotherhood. Guilty and terrified, the Languedocian troops threw themselves into their ancient city, and prepared to defend it as best they might ; but here again Fouquet triumphed by means as contrary to the commandment of God as they were odiously barbarous towards man. He caused the crusaders to assemble each morning close under the walls of Toulouse, the better to attract the attention of those within ; and then, instead of assailing its fortifications, to disperse ; each troop under its own leader, and each daily by a new route, across the plains, through the vallies, over the mountains, deliberately cutting down, uprooting and utterly destroying the fruit-trees, and every vegetable growth that could give promise of a future supply to the wretched proprietors and labourers of the soil. Not a vestige did they leave of aught that could yield harvest or vintage, or gleanings of any kind ; while, so far as their ingenuity could effect it, the very ground was rendered barren and worthless. From their towers and walls the people of Toulouse looked forth upon this fearful novelty in the warfare to which they had been so long accustomed ; for a novelty it was, because the united energies of a large army were devoted exclusively to the work, so

long as there lay within leagues around a spot wearing the aspect of present or future fertility. The citizens dared not venture forth, well knowing their inability to cope with the enemy, and the danger of leaving their gates with a diminished guard. The garrison, recently returned from the battle-field, was paralysed with conscious guilt : they had shown no mercy and could but expect tenfold retribution from a foe to whom for the first time they had given real cause of offence. Three months thus passed, without a day's cessation from the work of ruin, sufficed. Winter had arrived, and no harvest was housed, no vintage gleaned, no hope, for years to come, of that supply without which the wealthiest among them must perish. God's saints were the salt that preserved the mass so long ; they were gone, and nothing remained but natural corruption, eating its way through the abandoned body.

Raymond VII. made the best terms he could ; and they were sufficiently hard. Among them, he obliged himself to raze their walls, and to fill up the formidable ditches of Toulouse, rendering it incapable of ever presenting a defensive front to any assailant ; while a French garrison, occupying the splendid Narbonnese Castle, would keep strict watch over the proceedings of the citizens. Another article bound him to set a price on the head of every suspected heretic, throughout his dominions ; and a third to make war on his generous faithful allies, the Count of Foix, and all who yet showed a disposition to preserve their independence. But a more sure method of silencing for ever the voice of truth in those unhappy regions was adopted, by the

assembled prelates of the provinces, who met in council at Toulouse for that purpose ; and this was the introduction and permanent settlement of that master-piece of what is itself the master-piece of Satan—that most hideous child of a hideous parent, the Inquisition, which had received the fiat of its establishment, as a godly and useful means of upholding the power of the papacy, at the fourth council of Lateran, so infamously famous for its antichristian decrees. If now a single sheep or lamb of Christ's flock lurked among the blighted scenes of former peace and prosperity, it was sure to be discovered, brought forth, and immolated.

The treaty signed at Paris on the 12th of April, 1229, put a final close to the secular part of the contest, which had been carried on for more than twenty years, between the people and the princes of Languedoc, on the one side, and the court of Rome, aided by the armies of France, on the other. That treaty has been justly termed, "the most extraordinary that any sovereign had ever been required to sign. Each of its articles," says William de Puy Laurens, "contained a concession which might alone have sufficed for the ransom of the count of Toulouse, had he been made prisoner in a universal rout of all his army. Raymond nevertheless, did not hesitate to give his consent to it."* By that treaty, he surrendered to the King all his possessions in France, and to the legate of Rome, all that he held in the kingdom of Arles. After this universal renunciation, the king, as if by favour, granted him,

* Guill. de Podio Laurentii, c. xxxix. p. 691.

as a fief, for the remainder of his life, a part only of what he had taken from him, namely, a portion of the diocese of Toulouse, of Albigeois, and of Quercy, with the entire dioceses of Agenois and of Rouergue. These provinces, which the king restored to him, were, moreover, to form the portion of his daughter Jane, then nine years of age, whom he named his sole heiress, and whom he engaged to deliver immediately into the hands of Blanche, that she might bring her up under her own eyes, and afterwards marry her to one of her sons at her discretion. He also promised to pay 20,000 marks of silver in four years; further engaging, as we observed just now, to raze the walls and fill up the ditches of Toulouse;—to receive a French garrison into his castle;—to dismiss all his mercenaries, or hired troops; to make war upon all who had been his faithful allies; and to offer and pay a reward of two marks for every one of his own subjects who might be arrested as a heretic.

This entire subjugation of the prince was followed in November of the same year, by the permanent establishment of the Inquisition. In a council held at Toulouse, composed of the archbishops of Narbonne, of Bordeaux, and of Auch, with their suffragans, it was provided that the bishops were to depute into each province a priest, and two or three laics, to seek after, (having first engaged themselves by oath,) all the heretics and their abettors—‘Let them visit carefully,’ says the first canon, ‘each house in their parish, and the subterranean chambers, which any suspicion shall have caused to be remarked; let them examine all the out-

houses, the retreats under the roofs, and all the secret places, which we order them, besides, everywhere to destroy : if they find there any heretics, or any of their abettors or concealers, let them in the first place provide that they may not escape : then let them, with all haste, denounce them to the archbishop, the bishop, the lord of the place or his bailiffs, that they may be punished according to their deserts.'

The providence of God has wonderfully ordered, that we should learn, both the piety and constancy of the persecuted saints, and the Satanic means employed for their extirpation, *from Romish pens*. A work published by fathers Martene and Durand, of the congregation of St. Maur, preserves to us the instructions given to the Inquisitors, for the proper discharge of their duty. These instructions commence thus :—

' In this manner the inquisitors proceed in the provinces of Carcassonne and Toulouse. First, the accused or suspected of heresy is cited ; when he appears, he is sworn upon the holy Gospels, that he will fully say all that he knows for a truth, respecting the crime of heresy or Vaudoisie, as well concerning himself as others ; as well concerning the living as the dead. If he conceals or denies anything, he is put in prison, and kept there until he shall have confessed ; but if he says the truth, (that is, if he accuses either others or himself) his confession is diligently written down by a notary public. . . . When a sufficient number have confessed to make a sermon (thus they then called, what we at this day name, from a Portuguese word, *auto da fé*) the inquisitors convoke, in a suitable place, some

juris-consults, minor-brothers, and preachers, and the ordinaries, (the bishops) without whose counsel, or that of their vicars, no person ought to be condemned. When the council is assembled, the inquisitors shall submit to it a short extract from the confession of each person, but suppressing his name. They shall say, for example, *A certain person*, of such a diocese, has done what follows, after which the counsellors reply, *Let the inquisitor impose upon him an arbitrary penance, or let this person be immured, or in fine, let him be delivered to the secular arm.* After which they are all cited for the following Sunday. On this day, the inquisitors, in the presence of the prelates, the abbots, the bailiffs, and all the people, cause those to be first called, who have confessed and persisted in their confession ; for, if they retract, they are sent back to prison, and their faults only are recited.

‘ They begin with those who are to have arbitrary penances : to them they give crosses, they impose pilgrimages, greater or smaller, according to their faults ; to those who have perjured themselves, they give double crosses. All these having gone out with their crosses, they recite the faults of those who are to be immured, making them rise, one after the other, and each remain standing whilst his confession is read. When it is finished, the inquisitor seats himself, and gives his sentence sitting, first in Latin, then in French.

‘ Finally, they recite the faults of the relapsed, and the sentence being pronounced, they are delivered. . . . Nevertheless, those who are delivered as relapsed, are not to be burned the same day they are delivered ; but,

on the contrary, they ought to be engaged to confess themselves, and receive the eucharist, if they require it, and if they give signs of true repentance, for thus wills the lord Pope.'

Such was the external form observed. But the same two Benedictine fathers have admitted us somewhat farther into the interior of these proceedings. A later instruction, printed by them, is as follows :—

'Even he who is the most profoundly plunged in heresy, may sometimes be brought back, by the fear of death, or the hope that he shall be permitted to live, if he confess sincerely the errors which he has learned, and if he denounce any others whom he may know to belong to this sect. If he refuses to do it, let him be shut up in prison, and given to understand, that there are witnesses against him, and that if he be once convicted by witnesses, there will be no mercy for him, but he will be delivered to death. At the same time let his food be lessened, for such fear and suffering will contribute to humble him. Let none of his accomplices be permitted to approach him, lest they encourage him, or teach him to answer with artifice, and not to betray any one. Let no other approach him, unless it be from time to time two *adroit* believers, who may advise him cautiously, and as if they had compassion upon him, to deliver himself from death, to confess where he has erred, and upon what points, and who may promise him that if he do this he shall escape being burned. For the fear of death, and the love of life, sometimes soften a heart, which cannot be affected in any other manner. Let them speak to him also in an encouraging manner,

saying, "Be not afraid to confess, if you have given credit to these men when they said such and such things, because you believed them virtuous. If you heard them willingly, if you assisted them with your property, if you confessed yourself to them, it was because you loved all whom you believed to be good people, and because you knew nothing ill respecting them. The same might happen to men much wiser than you, who might also be deceived by them." If he begins then to soften, and to grant that he has, in some place, heard these teachers speak concerning the gospels or the epistles, you must then ask him, cautiously, if these teachers believed such and such things, for example, if they denied the existence of purgatory, or the efficacy of prayers for the dead, or if they pretended that a wicked priest, bound by sin, cannot absolve others, or what they say about the sacraments of the church? Afterwards, you must ask them, cautiously, whether they regard this doctrine as good and true, for he who grants this, has thereby confessed his heresy. . . Whereas if you had asked him bluntly whether he believed the same things, he would not have answered, because he would have suspected that you wished to take advantage of him and accuse him as a heretic . . . These are very subtle foxes, and you can only take them by a crafty subtilty."

We will add here a last instruction given by the inquisitor, the author of this work, to his brother, drawn from his personal experience. 'Note,' says he, 'that the inquisitor ought always to *suppose* a fact, without any proof, and only inquire after the circumstances of

the fact. For example, he should say, How many times hast thou confessed thyself to the heretics ? or, in what chamber have the heretics slept in thy house ? or similar things.'

'In like manner the inquisitor may, from time to time, consult a book, *as if he had* the life of the heretic written there, and all the questions that he was to put to him.

'Likewise, when a heretic confesses himself to him, he ought to impose upon him the duty of accusing his accomplices, otherwise he would not give a sign of true penitence.

'Likewise, when a heretic either does not fully confess his errors, or does not accuse his accomplices, you must say to him, in order to terrify him, "Very well, we see how it is. Think of thy soul, and fully renounce heresy, for thou art about to die, and nothing remains but to receive with true penitence all that shall happen to thee." And if he then says : "Since I must die, I had rather die in my own faith than in that of the church ;" then it is certain that his repentance was feigned, and he may be delivered up to justice.'

The general plan was now entirely formed. Subsequent councils, treaties, and papal edicts, filled up the outline, in subsequent years, so as to leave no possible way of escape for even the suspected. In April 1233, a bull of Gregory the IXth confided the work of the Inquisition especially to the Dominicans, while in his letters the Pope exhorted Louis IX. to unite his zeal with that of the monks, and to inflict upon the relapsed heretics, convicted by the inquisitors, their merited pu-

nishments. He also recommended the Dominican monks to all the prelates in the kingdom, and to the nobles and barons of Aquitaine, praying them to aid these monks in the execution of their commission. The bishop of Tournay, as legate of the holy see, named two Dominicans at Toulouse, and two in each other city of the province, to form the tribunal of the faith. And Raymond, appearing inactive in the work, was summoned before the legate and the king at Melun, where he subscribed new statutes, then demanded of him, by which, (and they are now extant) 'he engages to pursue and exterminate those who had killed the persecutors of the heretics, and to reward with a mark of silver, whoever should denounce, arrest, or cause to be arrested, a heretic ; to cause every house to be pulled down in which an asylum had been offered to one of the proscribed, or even where he might have found a burial ; to confiscate the goods of those who should have rendered them any kind office ; to destroy every lonely cottage, every grotto, every fastness, where they might find a refuge ; to take from the children of the heretics, and confiscate, whatever property they might have inherited from their parents ; to punish, by the confiscation of all their goods, and that without prejudice to corporal punishments, all those who, being called upon by the inquisitors to assist in the arrest of a heretic, should either refuse, or by design should suffer the accused to escape.' In these same statutes, imposed upon Count Raymond, numerous articles were added to the preceding, to reach those who should endeavour, by quitting their homes, or conveying their property by fictitious sales, or by

other means, to escape from the rapacity of the officers. These articles agreed on at Melun were afterwards published at Toulouse on the 18th of February 1234. A council held at Beziers, in the same year, under the presidency of the legate, added still more to this oppression, by permitting any of the faithful to arrest every suspected person, in any place whatsoever, upon an accusation of heresy, and by threatening with the heaviest penalties those who should in any way obstruct these private arrests, as soon as the word heresy was pronounced.*

Two years after, in 1235, another council was held at Narbonne—the chief object of which seems to have been, to multiply the cases in which, by a fiction of law, they might apply the punishment of relapse or revolt. The forms of procedure prescribed by this circular are perhaps more important than even the definition of the crimes. ‘As to those you are to arrest,’ say the prelates, ‘we think proper to add, that no man can be exempted from imprisonment, on account of his wife, however young she may be; no woman, on account of her husband: nor both of them on account of their children, their relations, or those to whom they are most necessary. Let not any one be exempted from prison, on account of weakness, or age, or any similar cause. . . . If you have not succeeded in arresting them, hesitate not to proceed against the absent, as if they were present; take particular care, in conformity with the discerning will of the apostolic see, not to publish by word or sign, the names of the witnesses; and if the

* Labbe, vol. xi. pp. 443, 452.

culprit pretends, that he has enemies and that they have conspired against him, ask the names of those enemies, and the cause of that conspiracy, for thus you will provide for the safety of the witnesses, and the conviction of the accused. On account of the enormity of this crime, you ought to admit, in proof of it, the testimony of criminals, of *infamous persons*, and of accomplices. He who *persists in denying* a fault, of which he may be convicted by witnesses, or by any other proof, must be considered, without hesitation, as an impenitent heretic.*

It was hard for human nature to bear all this rigour. A letter from the consuls of Narbonne to those of Nismes, details the particulars of a quarrel which took place between the civic authorities and the Inquisitors. The consuls allege, that these ecclesiastics, despising all the rules of justice, thought of nothing but how to get possession of the property of the rich, even when they were exposed to no suspicion of heresy. They add, that when the inquisitors had plundered them, sometimes they dismissed them without trial, and sometimes they caused them to perish in prison, without pronouncing any sentence upon them. They then proceed to give examples of the interrogatories of the inquisitors, to which it was impossible to reply without being convicted of heresy. The greater part of these questions are as improper to be repeated, as they were incapable of being answered, being frivolous, captious, and indecent; but they afterwards passed to others of a somewhat different kind. ‘They demanded of these

* Labbe, vol. xi. p. 488, 501.

simple laics, if the host which the priest consecrated contains all the body of Jesus Christ? If the laic answers that it contains the entire body of Jesus Christ, the inquisitor directly replies: You believe then that when four priests, who are in one church, consecrate each of them a host, as they ought to do, each of these hosts contains the body of Jesus Christ? If the laic replies that he believes so, You think then, replies the inquisitor, that there are four Gods? Then the affrighted laic affirms the contrary.*

Tyrannical, however, as was the conduct of the Dominicans, their yoke could not be shaken off, nor their main purpose defeated. 'Heresy' was effectually extirpated in those provinces. Yet was the ancient maxim still shewn to be true,—that "the blood of the martyrs is the seed of the Church." Driven from their happy and peaceful abodes, the 'heretics' of Albi and Toulouse wandered far and wide, and the history of Europe brings them to our view, year by year, during a full century after, in all parts of this quarter of the globe. No voice, no outward appearance announced the preaching of reform, or troubled the public tranquillity. Yet, the proscribed Albigenes, who, far from their country, had found an asylum in the cottage of the peasant, or the poor artisan, whose labours they shared in profound obscurity, had taught their hosts to read the gospel in common, to pray in their native tongue without the ministry of priests, to praise God, and gratefully submit to the chastisements which his hand inflicted, as the means of their sanctification. In vain did the

* Hist. de Nîmes, tom. i. liv, iii. p. 307.

inquisition believe that it had compelled human reason to submission, and established an invariable rule of faith. In the midst of the darkness which it had created, it saw, all at once, some luminous points appear where it would least have expected them. Its efforts to extinguish, served only to scatter them, and no sooner had it conquered, than it was compelled to renew the combat.

‘Gregory IX, who had deemed the very soil of Languedoc polluted, by its having produced so many sectaries, and that the count of Toulouse could not be innocent, whilst he had so many heretics amongst his subjects, all at once discovered, with alarm, that even at Rome he was surrounded with heretics. To give an example to Christendom, he caused a great number of them to be burned before the gates of Santa Maria Majora ; he afterwards imprisoned, in the convents of la Cava, and of the Monte Cassino, those who were priests or clerks, and who had been publicly degraded, with those that had given signs of penitence. At the same time, he caused the senators of Rome to promulgate an edict, which determined the different punishments to be assigned to the heretics, to those who encouraged them, to those who should give them an asylum, and to those who neglected to accuse them ; always dividing the confiscations between the spy who denounces, and the judge who condemns, that the scaffolds might never be left without victims ; a combination which the Roman court has not renounced to this day. He sent the senators’ edict and his own bull to the archbishop of Milan, to engage him to follow his

example. He afterwards profited by his recent reconciliation with Frederic II, to announce to him, that Cathari, Paterini, Poor of Lyons, and other heretics, formed in the school of the Albigenses, had at the same time appeared in Lombardy and in the two Sicilies, and to obtain from his friendship an edict which has gained him the eulogium of the annalist of the church, and has been deposited in the pontifical archives. By this edict, the emperor commanded all podestats and other judges, immediately to deliver to the flames every man who should be convicted of heresy by the bishop of his diocese, and to pull out the tongues of those to whom the bishop should think it proper to show favour, that they might not corrupt others, by attempting to justify themselves. After having thus raged in Italy against the fugitive Albigenses and their disciples, Gregory IX. did not forget to pursue them in France. He wrote to the archbishop of Bourges, and to the bishop of Auxerre, to exhort them to show themselves worthy of the sacred ordination they had received, by committing to the flames all the heretics that had been discovered at *la Charité upon the Loire.* *

Germany was soon found to be similarly infested. The city of Stettin was reported to be filled with heresy ; and Gregory addressed bulls to the bishops of Minden, of Lubeck, and of Rochhasburg, to incite them to preach up a crusade against the heretics. The mandate was obeyed, and the Duke of Brabant and the Count of Holland took the command of a new army of the cross. The Romish annalists tell us, that in the

* Sismondi's *Albigensic Crusade*, pp. 235—237.

year 1233, "an *innumerable multitude* of heretics was burned alive, through all Germany; while a still greater number apostatized." * From our own chronicler, Knighton, we learn, that many of the Aquitanian fugitives escaped into England, and that some of them were burned. Thuanus says, that others migrated into Calabria, and some to Bohemia and Poland. A few, it is certain, found a peaceful refuge among the Valdenses of Piedmont; for a Romish missionary who visited the vallies of Piedmont in A. D. 1405, states, that he found there two distinct communities:—one, of the ancient Vaudois, the other, a body of Albigeos, who had dwelt there ever since they had been driven from their homes, in the crusades of the thirteenth century.

The history, then, of the extirpation of this once flourishing church of Languedoc, presents, at one view, the fulfilment of various promises and predictions which we find in God's word. There is "a threefold cord," which is "not easily broken."

1. We are warned by Daniel, that, during the predicted reign of the Little Horn, that Antichristian power should "wear out the saints of the Most High;"—which should be "given into his hand," until the completion of "a time and times and half a time." This is the "WAR WITH THE SAINTS,"—in which, as the prophet was forewarned, the Little Horn should "prevail against them." The very same remarkable expression is adopted by St. John, whose ten-horned beast made "WAR WITH THE SAINTS; and overcame them;"

* Labbe, tom. xi. p. 477.

—and whose Great Harlot, seated on that beast, is seen “drunken with the blood of the saints ; and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus.”

2. But our Lord himself forewarns and instructs his disciples, what they should do, under these circumstances. He plainly told his followers, “Then shall they deliver you up to be afflicted, and shall kill you : and ye shall be hated of all nations for my name’s sake. And then shall many be offended, and shall betray one another, and shall hate one another. And many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many. And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold. But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved.” (Matt. xxiv. 9—13.)

And again :—

“Ye shall be hated of all men for my name’s sake : but he that endureth to the end shall be saved. But when they persecute you in this city, flee ye into another : for verily I say unto you, Ye shall not have gone over the cities of Israel, till the Son of man be come.” (Matt. x. 22, 23.)

And further :—

“And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations ; and then shall the end come.” (Matt. xxiv. 14.)

3. The sure and supporting promise, however, on which his persecuted people might rely, was given to them at the very moment of his parting, when he said, “Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost : Teaching them to observe all things

whatsoever I have commanded you : and, Lo, I AM WITH YOU ALWAYS, EVEN UNTO THE END OF THE WORLD." (Matt. xxviii. 19, 20.)

Thus, we observe, first, that for a certain allotted period, the Man of Sin was to have dominion,—was to overcome the saints, and to become drunken with their blood : secondly, that the Lord's people were to be thus driven from one country to another, assured of this, that amidst all their wanderings, they would not have completed their task of preaching the Gospel to every nation under heaven, until the very moment of their Lord's approach. But, thirdly, under all these sufferings and discouragements, "troubled on every side, but not distressed ; perplexed, but not in despair, persecuted, but not forsaken, cast down, but not destroyed,"—they had the last, the sure promise of Christ himself for their perpetual consolation :—"Lo, I am with you ALWAYS, even *unto the end of the world.*"

Such is the infallible portraiture of the condition and the destiny of the people of God during the reign of Antichrist ; and most fully have we seen it fulfilled in the history which we have now concluded.

Yet, strange to say, there are still some to be found,—not among Tractarians or secret Romanists merely, but among sincere Christians, like the late Dr. Arnold, and some of the Dissenters, who resolutely shut their eyes to the leading facts of this case. They admit the existence of much bigotry and intolerance,—but this, they add, you may find in the days of Cyprian and Jerome, as well as in the times of Hildebrand or Innocent III. They acknowledge, too, the existence

of many corruptions, in the middle ages ;—but the seminal principle of all these corruptions, they add, was perceptible even in apostolic days. Thus, by firmly closing their eyes against the plainest facts of history, they arrive at the conclusion, that there was no APOSTACY, and no “WAR WITH THE SAINTS.”

To render this view at all tenable, however, they are forced to question the authenticity of the book of Daniel, and to maintain that the Apocalypse pictures forth *either* the events of the days of Nero, or else the events of a period which has not yet even commenced !

The simple-minded and humble student of God’s word, however, will only be repelled and alarmed by these violent propositions. He finds Holy Scripture and the records of even Roman historians uniting in the fullest harmony to establish the fact, that from the commencement of the mystic 1260 years, to its close, there was existing in Europe a Great Spiritual Tyranny ;—and that by this Tyranny “the Saints,” whether Paulicians, Cathari, Vaudois, Albigeois, or Lollards,—were uniformly ‘warred against ;’ and, until the close of the allotted period, were ‘worn out,’—‘prevailed against,’—and ‘slain.’



APPENDIX.

OF the Albigenses, their purity of doctrine and of life, and the last traces that remain of them, in the page of history, the following records ought perhaps to be added :—

“ A contemporary historian, after describing the missionary efforts of Dominic and the Bishop of Ozma against them, says, that these apostles of Popery demanded of the inhabitants of those parts, why they did not drive the heretics out of their country ? To which the answer was, ‘ We cannot ! we have been brought up with them ; we have relations among them, and we see *the goodness of their lives.*’ ‘ And thus,’ adds the historian, ‘ does the spirit of falsehood, only by the appearance of a *pure and spotless life*, lead away these inconsiderate people from the truth.’

“ In fine, the real state of the case, (allowing for their own bias) is truly described by two French historians. Paradin, the annalist of Burgundy, says :—

“ ‘ I have seen certain histories, in which both the Albigenses and their princes stand excused of the allegations so frequently brought against them. The vices

and errors of Manicheism, with which they were said to be stained, *were purely fictitious*. Through sheer malice, such enormities were imputed to them by their enemies. *They did none of the things whereof they were falsely accused*; though they did indeed, somewhat too freely, reprehend the vices and corruptions of the prelates.’

“ And Bernard Girard thus confirms this view :—

“ ‘The Counts of Toulouse and Cominges and Bigorree, and even the King of Arragon himself, says he, espoused the party of the Albigenses. These sectaries were tainted with bad opinions, but that circumstance did not so much stir up against them the hatred of the Pope and of the great princes, as the freedom of speech with which they censured the vices and the dissolute manners of the said princes and ecclesiastics; for they were accustomed to reprehend the life and actions of the Pope himself. This was the chief matter which stirred up an universal hatred against them; and it moreover was the cause that *many nefarious opinions, from which they altogether dissented, were fictitiously ascribed to them*. The clergy of France, in short, *falsely accused the Albigenses of all sorts of heresies, merely because they exposed and reprehended their vices.*’* ”

“ ‘The fugitives of Languedoc scattered themselves over several of the kingdoms of Europe. Knighton says, that many of them escaped into England, and that some were burnt alive. Thuanus tells us, that others migrated into Calabria, and some to Bohemia and Poland. That one portion, at least, reached a quiet retreat in the

* The Church in the Middle Ages, pp. 337, 338.

valleys of Piedmont, seems clear from the fact, that in A.D. 1405, Vincent Ferrier, a Papist, visited these valleys for the purpose of proselyting their inhabitants to Romanism ; when he found there *two* distinct, though friendly communities ; one being that of the ancient Vaudois ; the other a body of Albigeois, who had resided there ever since the extirpation of the churches of Christ from Languedoc. Another century or two probably commingled these two communities together, but the fact, as existing in A.D. 1405, seems to be placed beyond a doubt.' " †

Of their great persecutor, perhaps the following notice may possess some interest :—A recent traveller in the South of France thus writes :

" The feeble and vacillating Count Raymond of Toulouse, the unhappy tool and slave of a spiritual power, whose temporal tyranny he at times resisted, and at times submitted to, died as he had lived, the victim of superstition : while he revolted from temporal oppression, he trembled at spiritual malediction.

" Unable to delight in the persecutions of his unoffending, pious subjects, he was accused by the inquisitorial monks, and even accused himself, of sympathising with heretics : a devout believer in the Church that stripped him of his lands and dignity, he endured all the horrors that a state of excommunication can inflict, and remained on his knees outside the Churches, which he was not allowed to pollute by entering.

* The Church in the Middle Ages, pp. 351, 352.

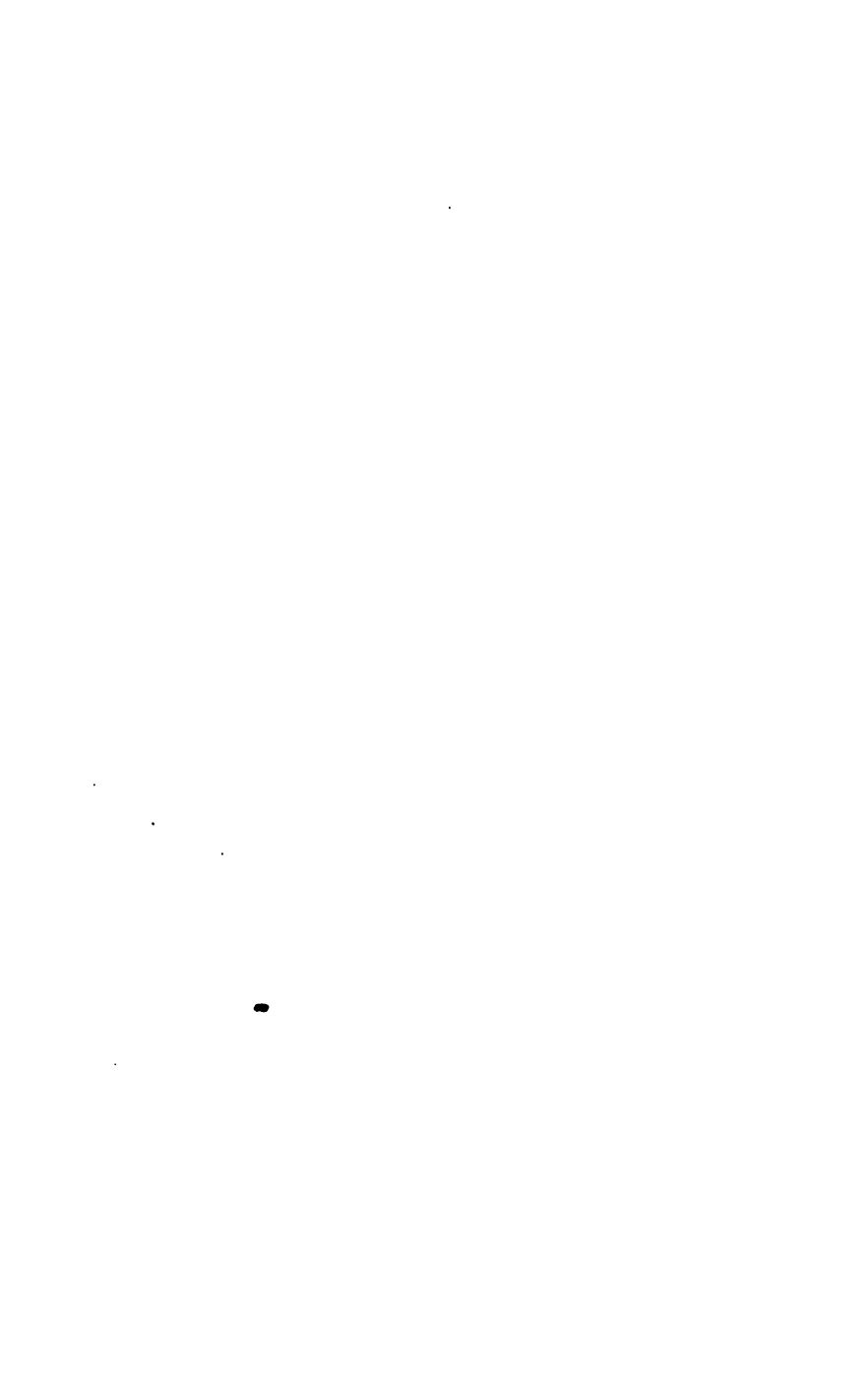
“As is usually the case with such minds, suffering and misfortune only tended to deepen superstitious feelings and terrors. He had assumed the order of St. John, and when speechless, before his death, he was covered with the mantle of his order, and seen to kiss it with the utmost devotion. Yet as an early patron of the Provençal heresy, the persecution of the Church continued even after his death; his body was not allowed to be buried; nor could his son even obtain leave to do so. His skull was long preserved at Toulouse, and there I looked with interest on his bust.

“The grave of Simon De Montfort, (if such it is) in the Cathedral of old Carcassone, is nameless: it is only a slab of red marble without name or date. I was looking at it with some of these thoughts in my mind, when a young Frenchman approached, and asked if I could tell him where was the tomb of a great saint, who had fought for the Christians several ages ago.

“I felt it strange to point down to the red slab, and answer—‘There’—Simon De Montfort, a great saint, and fighting for the Christians!” *

* *Christian Lady's Magazine*, vol. xxii. pp. 30, 31.

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